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REVIEWED / ROMANCE OF THE THREE KINGDOMS • MORE!

COMPUTER PLAY


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GAME OFFER
PAGE 48

SPECIAL
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SECTION

OCTOBER, 1988 ISSN 14042 \$2.95 US \$3.95 CAN

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO COMPUTER GAMES

NEW!
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"QUARTERBACK"



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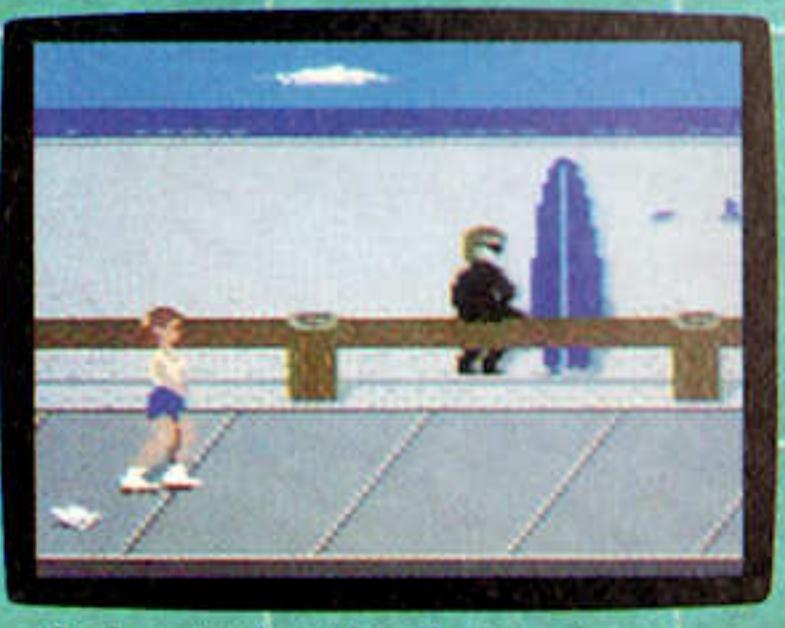
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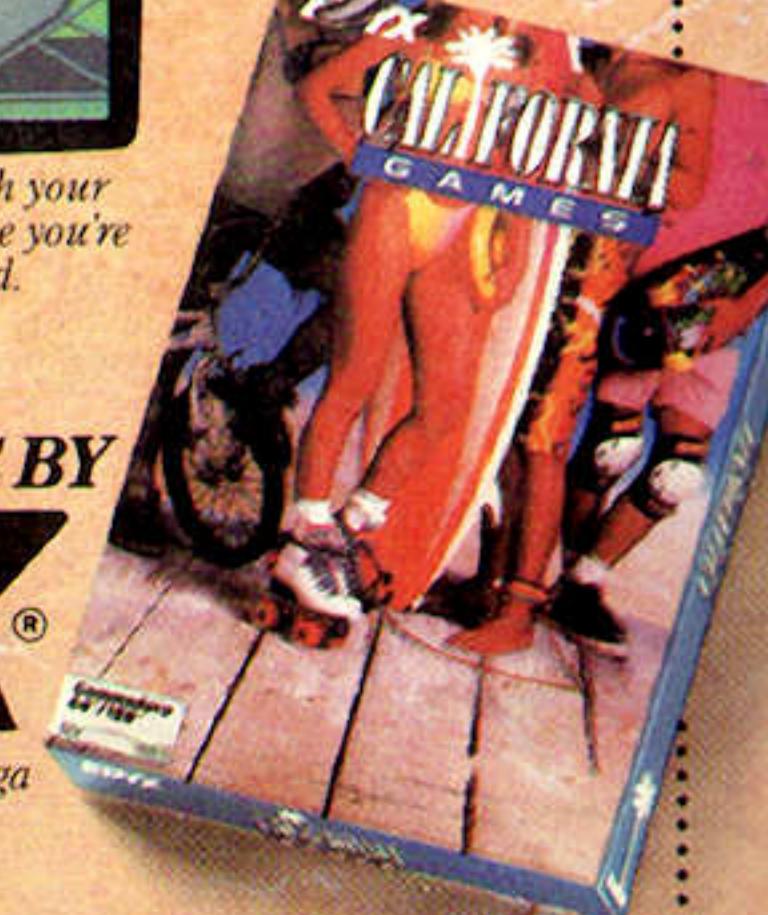


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Commodore 64/128, Apple II & Compatibles, IBM & Compatibles, Amiga

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Launch a few feet off-the-lip with your skateboard tucked high. And while you're up there, dance for the crowd.



Circle Reader Service Number 60.

John Elway's QUARTERBACK

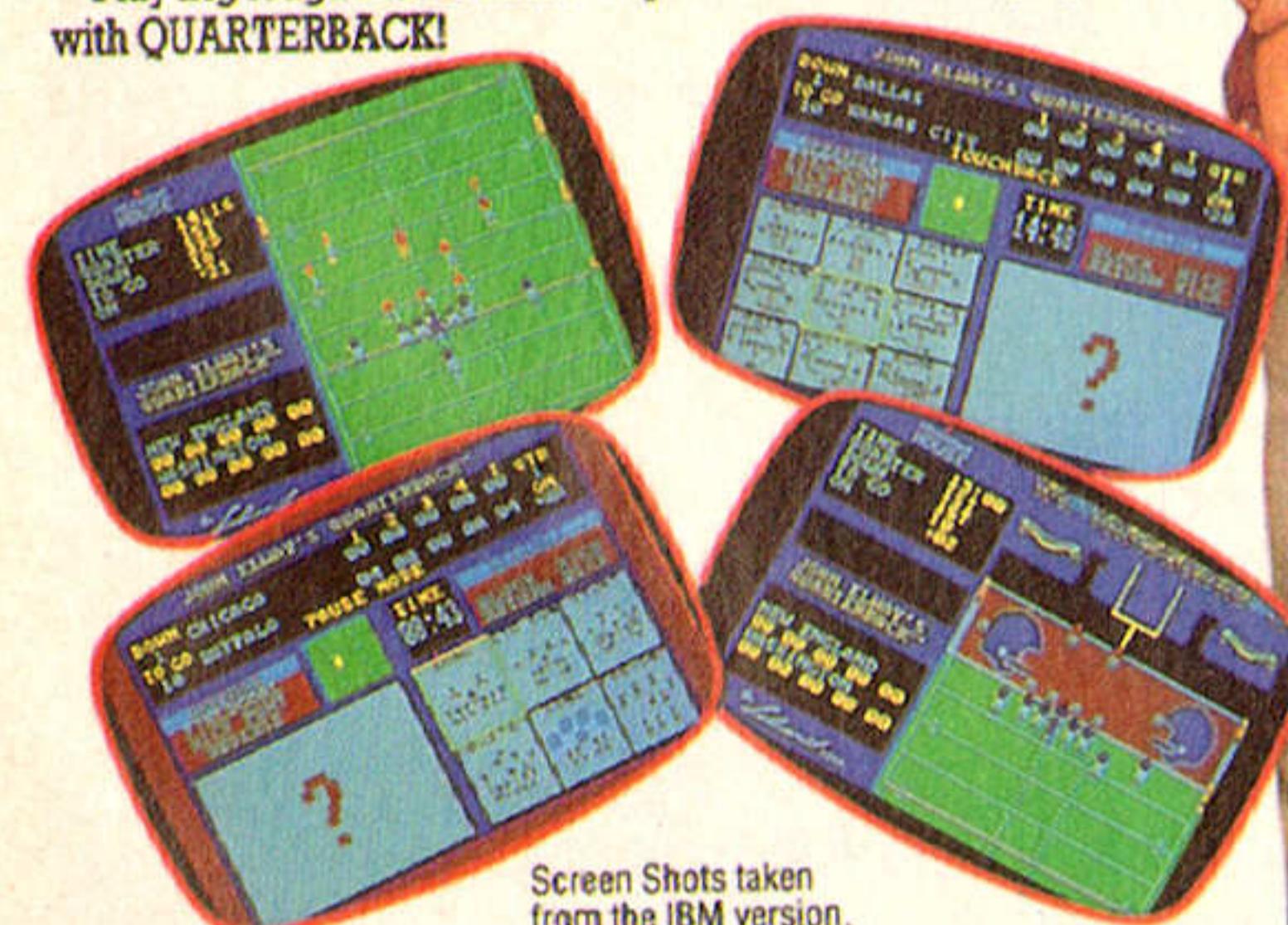
FOOTBALL THE WAY IT WAS MEANT TO BE PLAYED.

Third and ten on your own 30 yard line. Forty-three seconds left on the clock and you're down by two points. Suddenly the end zone seems to be a hundred miles away. If you're going to be a hero, now's the time. You call the play:

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Football action so real you can almost feel the pigskin in your hands. Designed under the watchful eyes of the game's premier quarterback - John Elway - this faithful computer version of the #1 arcade winner brings all the strategy and ground pounding excitement of the world's greatest sport right to your computer screen, one or two players!

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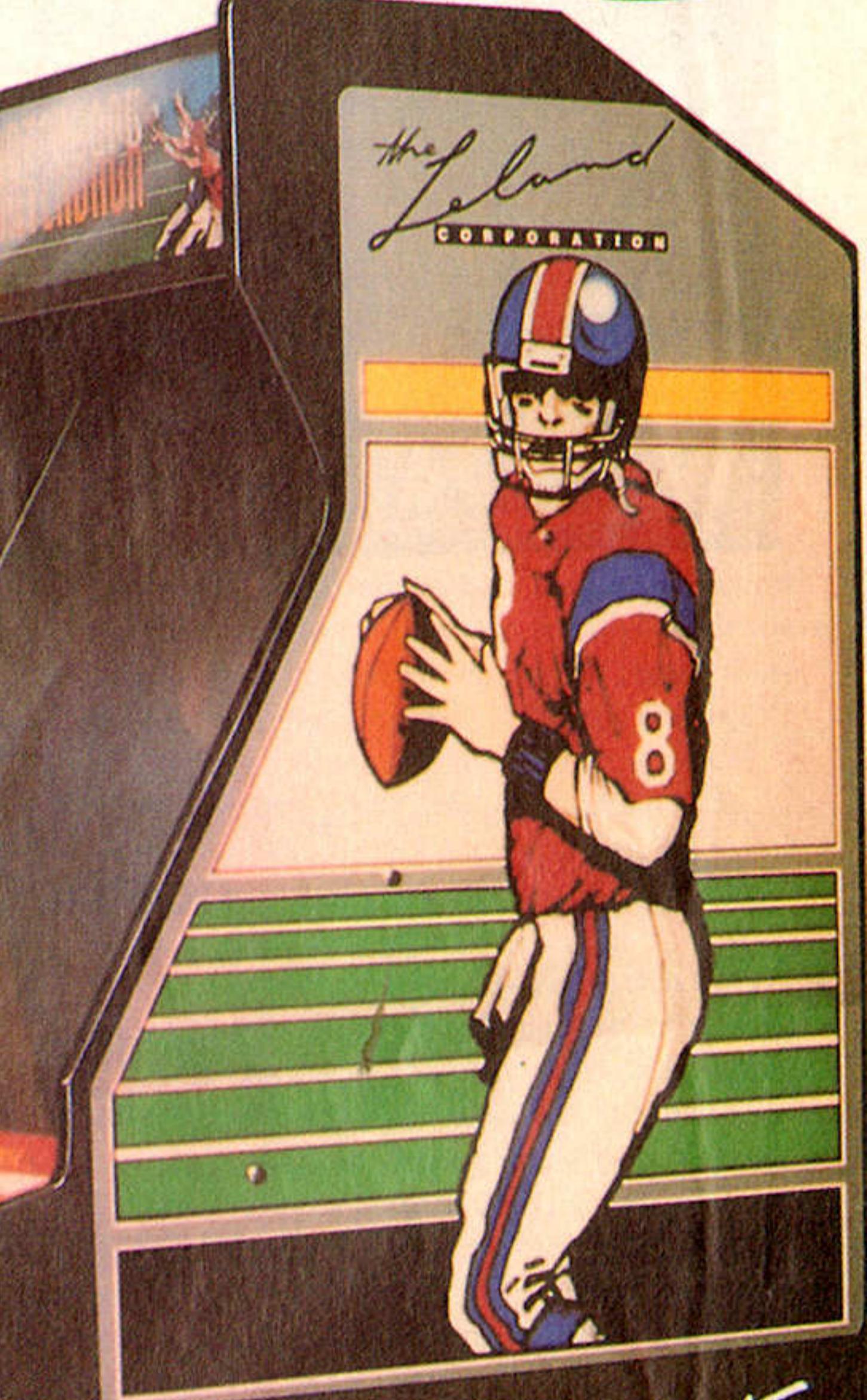
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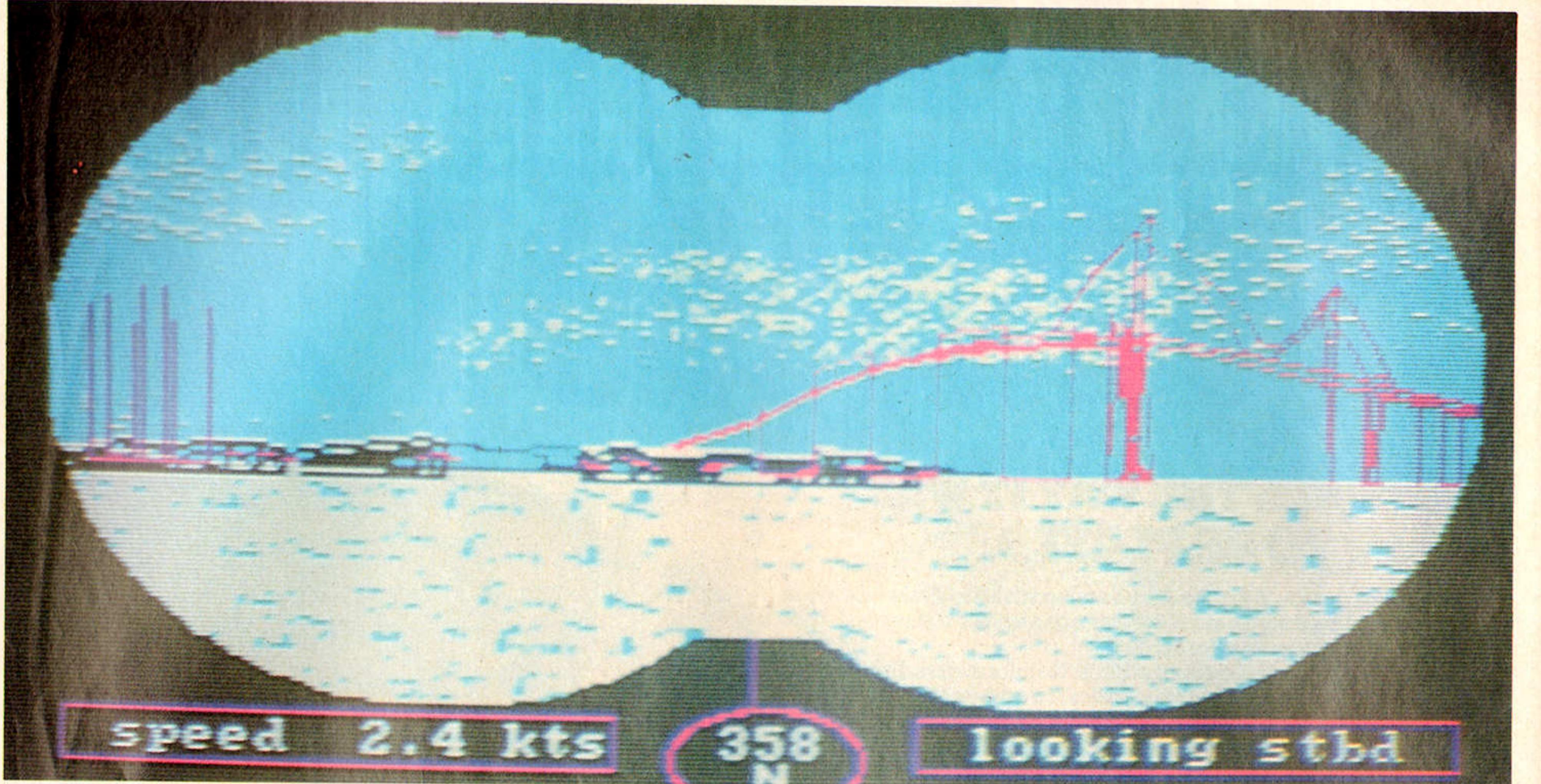
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You can tell a lot about a game by the people who play it.

At selected B Dalton Software Etc.,
Babbages, Electronic Boutique
Toys R Us, Waldenbooks
and other good software stores



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Editor's Page

Software Piracy: A Victimless Crime

By Ken Wasch

A Victimless Crime

How many people are in the practice of walking into the supermarket, loading up the grocery cart with goodies and walking out without paying? How many people would steal a newspaper from an unattended newspaper stand?

The answer to both questions, is of course, very few. On the other hand, how many people would make an extra copy of commercial software and give it to their friends?

Unfortunately, the answer is too many, and the result is that fewer software authors, developers and publishers can afford to work in the software industry. Software piracy, the unauthorized copying of software programs, is still the greatest issue facing the users and industry. No other industry in the world gives users the power to make perfect copies of the industry's products without compensating the product's owners.

Software piracy, seen from the perspective of another industry would be like buying one Mercedes and cloning it as many times for free distribution as the owner wished. Let's start with basics. Software programs, like music, videotapes, books and other forms of intellectual property are copyrighted. Software is no different than any other form of intellectual property; unauthorized copying of software programs is against the law. The laws that govern copyright are Federal statutes and they give the copyright owner the exclusive right to reproduce his/her work product. There is only one exception to that exclusive right. It is not a violation to make a back-up for archival purposes. This exception acknowledges that the media of computer software is fragile and that programs encoded on a disk may be lost inadvertently. The "archival" right does not give a purchaser the right to make copies that may be used simultaneously with the original. This is analogous to reading a book. Two people cannot read the same book at the same time. Therefore, if two copies of a software program are needed simultaneously, two copies of that program must be purchased.

With the proliferation of products that strip publisher encoded copy protection, even copy protected software may be illegally duplicated.

Ultimately a software author can only depend on moral suasion — or the user's good faith — to protect his or her work from illegal duplication.

Who Pays the Price for Software Piracy?

Piracy is not a victimless crime. Surprisingly however, the victims are not the industry's leaders such as Bill Gates (Microsoft) or Jim Manzi (Lotus), but small developers struggling to make a living on a new product. The extra dollars in

the logo. Fortunately, in the software business, we have not yet found cases of domestic counterfeiting of commercial software.

The second type of piracy is the duplication and sale of copies of copyrighted software, where the vendor acknowledges that he is selling a product that is copied from the software publisher. Generally, the label on the software is handwritten or typed (not printed with the publisher's logo), and manuals are either photocopied or not provided at all. This kind of software piracy takes many forms and includes unscrupulous retailers, some flea market merchants, and other individuals who may believe that publishers either do not care or are powerless to stop it.

The third kind of piracy is the distribution of copyrighted software through electronic bulletin boards. While in most of the cases bulletin boards perform a valuable service in facilitating the exchange of information, a small number engage in the illegal duplication and distribution of microcomputer software. These bulletin board operators illegally permit users to download copyrighted software without the permission of the publisher. Some operators erroneously believe that because they do not charge for the software, they are not violating the publisher's copyright.

They are wrong. As noted above, the U.S. copyright laws give the copyright holder the exclusive right to reproduce a copyrighted work.

The law makes no distinction as to whether the work is given away or sold.

The sharing of software among private individuals is the most difficult form of piracy to control. Obviously, the software industry cannot police each and every transaction involving the trading of software among users. Nevertheless, giving a friend a copy of copyrighted software is illegal. To prevent this type of activity, the industry has two choices: copy protection and moral suasion. Copy protection has virtually disappeared in business software, because users found the interference with hard disks to be a nuisance. Consumer and educational software is still, for the most part, copy protected and the impediment to users is negligible or nonexistent.

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Letters

Send letters to the editor to: Computer Play, 3321 W. Dempster, Skokie, IL 60076

What a Puzzle

If you would just follow me . . .

Fortunately I like word puzzles, otherwise I would not have bought Computer Play. It was placed in the middle of these magazines.

Delighted with Computer Play and would like to see more of the interviews with experts as done by Nancy West with POLICE QUEST. Baseball, golf, crossword puzzles, gardening, battles, etc. would be much more interesting if the pros would give their opinions about the programme.

I would like to see Walk-Thru's, perhaps at the back of the magazine, so the fanatics cannot complain about seeing the clues. If these could be a tear out section, they could be kept easily together in a file.

More on upcoming games, brief reviews of all games received but not worth a long review. I would also like to see a hobbies section for gardeners, home designers, knitters, crossword puzzle addicts, etc., these programmes are available but are never reviewed by other magazines. I make doll houses for relaxation, are there any computer games for this hobby?

Criticisms of games from readers, their wishes or ideas for new games, all this would be interesting.

Good luck, this was an excellent first edition with plenty of lovely pictures and colored advertisements.

M. Groff
San Francisco, CA

Editor's reply: Wellll . . . the subject of walk thru's is still a hot topic around the office. Many magazines' reviews have become just that, 'walk thru's'. Although we currently aren't featuring them, we would like to open the Game Hints and Tips column to just the sort of forum for questions and answers to certain game problems. If you are stuck on something specific, write a letter to us, and we will run it along with an answer provided by other readers, or we will contact the game company itself for suggestions.

We also like the idea of reader criticisms, or praises as the case may be! Send us your letters!!...to my Amiga!! OK Guys,

More Amiga

I'm willing to give your mag. a try. Like you said, it's the only game in town!

One thing though, I'd like to see the Amiga covered a bit better. After all, it is the BEST graphics and sound machine on the market!! IBM is great . . . but for games, the Amiga's the only choice!

JR Rich
Idaho Falls, ID

Satisfied Reader

This is one of the best computer magazines I have ever seen. I especially like the reviews and the advertisements (with pictures of how the games look on different computers), but I dislike the fact that there are no programs in it like other magazines have. I also feel that the magazine is way too short.

I have Nintendo, but all the games are easy . . . I hope computer games are a lot harder since I am getting a Commodore (64 or 128) in about 3-4 weeks. I would like to hear more about adventure and role playing games. Also, are there any educational games that are fun to play while actually learning something? (My sister told me to write this)

Your first reader,
Frankie Espinosa
Grand Prairie, TX

PS. Could you review LEGACY OF THE ANCIENTS, or ECHELON in your next issue? Thanks!!

Editor's reply: Thank you! Our intention is to provide the best screen shots available!! This way you can see what most games look like before you buy.

We are currently not carrying programs because most short programs for games cannot provide the graphics quality, or ease of play, that commercial games do. We will be on the lookout for shareware (games you try before you buy), and freeware (games you just copy and use), on the other hand, which would give you more choices as well.

Computer games are different than cartridge games, for one reason, because you need to use the keyboard on the computer. The educational aspect of any game can be considered, simply because the games make the player think, act, decipher, and sometimes research, to solve problems, and a terrific way to learn!

Software Piracy

◀ 3

revenue that are lost from stolen copies are much more threatening to smaller companies. Of course, large firms lose plenty due to piracy, but their survival is not generally threatened. Keep in mind that piracy deprives developers, writers, packagers, publishers, distributors and retailers of their lawful revenue. The ones who will ultimately bear the burden are those individuals who buy software. Very simply, if more products are sold, prices can drop and more innovative development can occur.

Earlier this year, the SPA launched a comprehensive litigation effort to crack-down on software piracy. The Copyright Protection Fund supported by companies including Lotus, Ashton-Tate, Microsoft and WordPerfect, is working to coordinate copyright and trademark litigation against domestic software pirates. As a result of these cooperative efforts, several lawsuits were filed against retailers, mail order operations and bulletin board operators. We wish that we did not have to resort to litigation, but the sad truth is that some pirates are unresponsive to our "moral suasion" arguments. There is no way to clearly monitor or prosecute all software pirates. Ultimately users themselves must recognize that they alone can control piracy. Once users recognize that a software program is the result of many individuals hard work, they will understand that these people have a right to be compensated for their efforts through legitimate software sales.

Ken Wasch is the Executive Director of The Software Publishers Association (SPA), the principal trade group of the microcomputer software industry. The SPA represents over 350 publishers, developers, distributors and all those affiliated with the microcomputer software industry.

One of the primary purposes of the SPA is to fight software piracy. The SPA has produced a booklet entitled "Software Use and the Law."

If you wish to receive a copy, please send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: Software Piracy, Software Publishers Association, Suite 901, 1101 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Industry News & Views

By Rusel DeMaria

As usual, there's lots of entertainment out there. Coming to a PC near you:

The big news currently has to do with censorship. Microprose is currently fighting battles in West Germany where their **Silent Service**, **F15 Strike Eagle**, **Gunship**, and **Airborne Ranger** have been banned for sale to under 18 year olds. The effect of the ban is more widespread than it seems because Microprose is also banned from advertising the products where underage readers might see the ads. This pretty much consigns the products to the back rooms and the underground.

According to a Microprose spokesman, the bans on their products claim that they glorify war, but they fail to include similar products like Gato, **Sub Battle Simulator**, and **Up Periscope**. The larger issue of censorship in general is significant here, and we'll keep a watchful eye out on this situation. Currently, Microprose is battling not on the PC, but in the courts.

Microprose battles censorship in West Germany. Some games banned for sale to minors.

role-playing game, a new Commodore skateboard game in which every surface is skateable and you compete for cash and prizes, and **Captain Blood** for the DOS machines, a romp through the galaxy in pursuit of evil clones who drain the life force from innocent victims. This one promises to send you an adventures to strange new worlds. Look for Captain Blood to follow on Amiga and Atari ST. Also coming are translations — **Uninvited** and **Indoor Sports** for the Atari ST, **Shadowgate** and Uninvited for the IIGS.

Speaking of outer space games, Broderbund is planning a micro computer version of the popular Star Wars game. First versions of **Star Wars** will be available on Commodore 64, Amiga, and Atari ST, but don't expect to see it before the end of the year. Also from Broderbund: **VCR Companion**, **Shufflepuck Cafe** (see this issue's Mousing Around), **Downhill Challenge** (a skiing game for the PC and the ST), **Where in Europe is Carmen Sandiego** for C64, **Fantavision** for Amiga, and **Ancient Art of War at Sea** for Mac, Tandy, and Apple II. A revamped version of the Apple II game Airheart has been released for the Atari ST under the name **Typhoon Thompson in Search of the Sea Child**. And finally, we await results from the agreement between Broderbund and their Japanese coalition, Kyodai Software Marketing. This alliance teams 11 Japanese companies with Broderbund to market computer games from Japan in the U.S.

Cinemaware brings us **Rocket Ranger**, for those who want to play a somewhat more old fashioned hero. In this fantasy, you play the hero in a Saturday afternoon serial like they used to have many years ago. Rocket Ranger promises to be a cliff hanger with all the great style seen in other

Cinemaware titles, and should be available on most computer systems. Cinemaware is also bringing us **Lords of the Rising Sun**, a Japanese descendant of **Defender of the Crown**, and the first of their sports simulations, **TV Football**, for the Amiga (then for the IBM). We'll keep a sharp eye out for that one. Also coming during the next year: 7 new titles for the Apple II GS.

Infocom's newest offerings include **Zork Zero** which takes you to the time before Zork (by the same wags who brought us **Leather**

Goddesses of Phobos), **Journey**, an innovative role-playing story in the Tolkien tradition of magic and adventure, **Battletech**, billed as "the first animated and largest computer role playing game . . .". **Quarterstaff**, another new role playing game for the Mac II, and **Shogun**, James Clavell's masterpiece translated to the "small" screen. Infocom's development teams have switched to working with the Mac II, so we can look forward to fine Mac versions of these games as well as versions for all other formats, of course.

Nintendo should have their **Zelda II (Legend of Link)** and **Super Mario Bros. II** hitting the stores by now, and video game fans are eagerly awaiting those titles. Also on the Nintendo front, Cinemaware has licensed several of its popular computer games to be produced in Nintendo versions. Look for **Defender of the Crown** and **Three Stooges** to hit cartridge city some time next year.

Speaking of Nintendo, look for Konami to heat things up by releasing ten new Nintendo titles over the next year, including **Metal Gear**

Infocom to be releasing James Clavell's Shogun soon and Battletech — "the largest role-playing game."

(out now), **Skate or Die**, **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles**, and **Defender of the Crown**.

Koei, whose **Nobunaga's Ambition** is a hit, is planning a new game based on Genghis Khan. This war simulation will appear initially on the IBM. Expect to see Koei translations for Atari, Mac, Amiga, IIGS, and savable Nintendo cartridges over the next six months or so.

Epyx is coming up with **Metrocross**, a long-distance running game with some interesting challenges thrown in. Also, new

Computer Play Online

Computer Play Magazine is now online with:

CompuServe

Current Articles are featured in **The Electronic Gamer** (type Go TEG) and look for **COMPUTER PLAY ONLINE!** If you have any questions, hints or tips, or just want to leave a note by Email, our access number is 76702,253. We would love to hear from You!!! Check with the TEG column for our monthly updates and interesting articles!!

LOTTERY JACKPOTS NOT JUST DUMB LUCK!



GAIL HOWARD is the nation's leading lottery expert. Her track record in helping Lotto players win big prizes is unprecedented in the history of the game. At least 13 major Lotto prizes (including TEN first prize jackpots) totaling \$30.8 million were won with Gail's systems!

At last...now available on IBM PC 5 1/4" or 3 1/2" diskettes the famous Gail Howard *Lottery Advantage* number selection methods, the *Smart Luck Computer Advantage**, and the complete authentic Gail Howard *Balanced Wheeling Systems**, the *Smart Luck Computer Wheel**. Both systems are menu driven (user friendly).

Gail Howard's *Smart Luck Computer Advantage** (\$39.95 + \$2 s/h) has the most successful number selection systems ever devised for beating the odds in Lotto. Contains a series of 11 programs, nine of which produce 10 charts and listings, the entire historical winning numbers list for one Lotto game of your choice (\$7 for each additional Lotto game) and options to add latest drawings. Available for any state of international Lotto game. Please specify which Lotto game(s).

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Gail Howard's book, *LOTTO: How to Wheel a Fortune* (228 pages - \$14.95 + \$2 s/h)

SMART LUCK COMPUTER SYSTEMS
P.O. Box 1519 — Dept. Z1 — White Plains, NY 10602
312-934-3300

Circle Reader Service Number 54.

Game Hints

GO GET'M GWYDION!!!

Here are a few hints on KING'S QUEST III, from Sierra On-Line, it is available for the 512K Amiga, 512K Atari, 256K IBM, Tandy, 128K Apple IIe and IIc. These hints are from Michael D. Pittaro from Hudson, NH. *** When you leave the Wizards house, don't take any magic items or it might mean your head. *** To kill the wizard you need: porridge, 1/2 cup of mandrake root powder, some cat hair, two spoonfuls of fish oil, one magic wand. *** To cast the spell, turn to page XXV. *** The spell book is in the cellar. *** The mice you find in the ship tell you something very useful. *** The snow man can't hurt you if you're an eagle. *** The dragon who guards your sister hates thunderstorms.

BEWARE THE HERMIT!!

These set of hints are from Jeff Miller from Bartlesville, OK., and are about the game; MIGHT AND MAGIC, from New World Computing.

In the northeast dead-end in Sorgigal there is a hidden post with a statue behind it. This statue will tell you how to help Og. *** In King Alamar's throne room there are 2 hidden doors on either side of an alcove. Each holds lots of cash! You will have to fight some pretty tough creatures to get to it! *** At the bottom level dungeon in the golden city there is a hallway full of dragons. At the end is a checkered pattern. Search there for an idol. *** And last . . . Do NOT trade your goods with the hermit! He will take everything you own!

Egad . . . Gato!!

These tips are for GATO by Spectrum HoloByte from an enthusiastic Chicago reader:

Go to your quadrant map to find out where your enemies and friends are. *** Stay above the water when you are not engaged in battle. *** Don't be afraid to use your periscope. *** Try not to use the batteries. *** Enemy vessels have a tendency to come in patterned groups of 5 or 6. *** Don't waste your torpedoes, air, and don't forget to refuel!!

5

versions of Dive Bomber.

LucasFilms Games is said to be working on a hot new IBM title, but they aren't talking about it, yet. Look for more information next month. In the meantime, they have plans to release an IBM version of Strikefleet soon (see PHM Pegasus in this issue).

Sierra On-Line is following in its own successful footsteps with King's Quest IV (which should be out now). Also coming: Space Quest III, Police Quest II, Leisure Suit Larry II, and an historical adventure game, Goldrush. Goldrush promises historical accuracy as you try to get to California during the gold rush years. Watch out for people named Donner. Sipheed is a second generation of the popular Japanese game, Thexter, and features a rhythm track added by Bob Siedenberg, drummer for Super Tramp, and a score by William Goldstein whose credits include some Grammies.

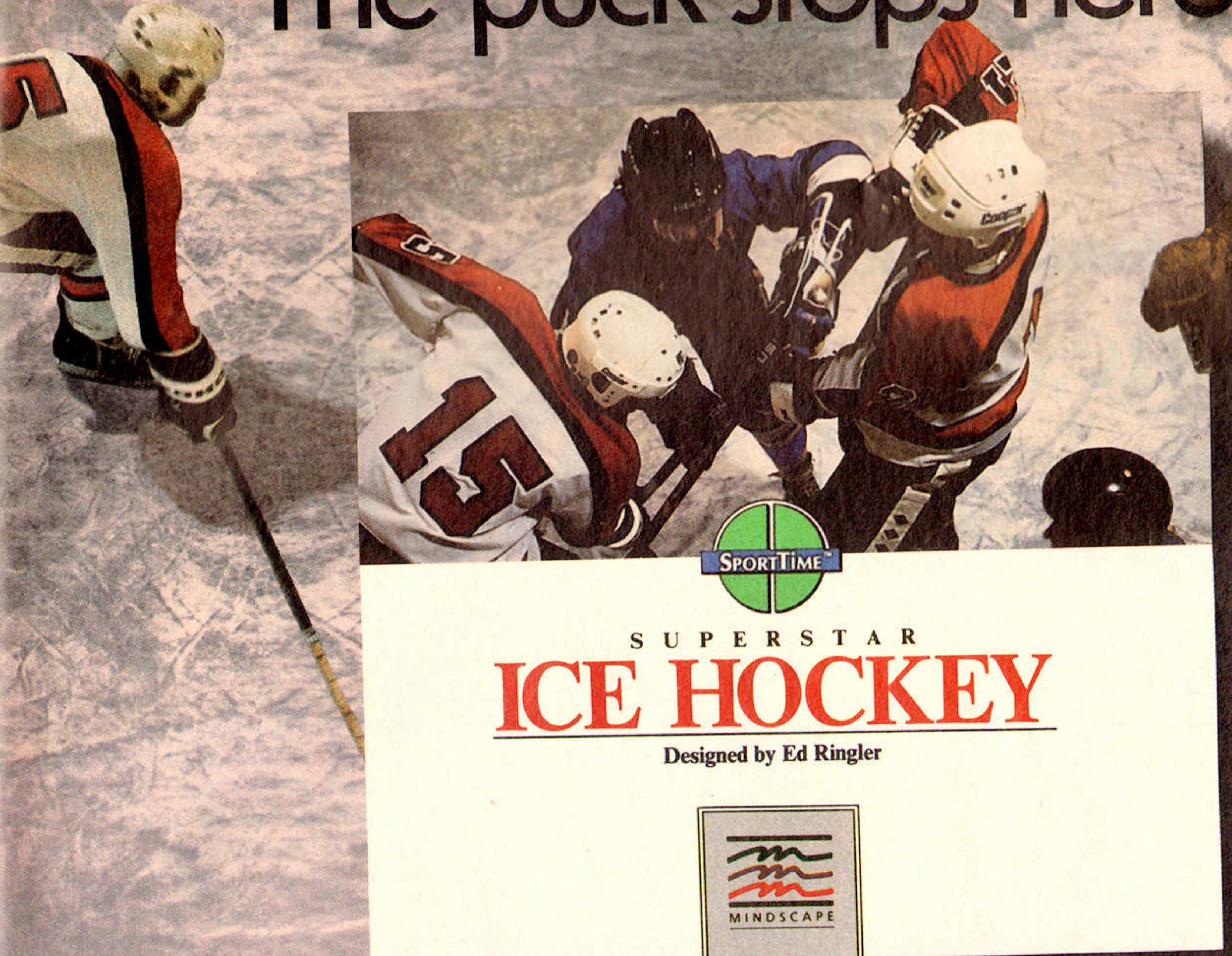
Epyx is going the distance with Metrocross, a running game as well as new versions of Dive Bomber.

PCAI, who brought us MacGolf and MacRaquetball are about to release a high performance driving simulation for the Mac, Road Racer, which will feature cross country driving in a '65 Corvette.

And Miles Computing is coming out with a new product called Puzzle Gallery while translating their popular Fool's Errand to PC, IIGS, and ST formats. Also look for translations of Harrier Strike Mission II.

Rainbird has released Enlightenment and Black Lamp, two titles in their new arcade/adventure series. The first titles are available on the Amiga and C64/128 machines. Black Lamp is also available on the Atari ST. Coming soon are two new titles, Virus and SpaceCutter.

The puck stops here!

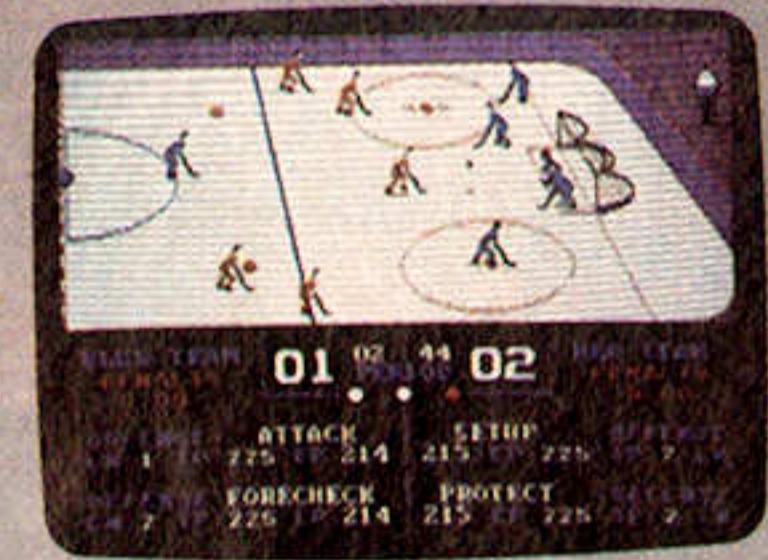


SUPERSTAR ICE HOCKEY

Designed by Ed Ringler



STOP LOOKING. THEY DON'T GET ANY BETTER THAN THIS.



Here's what the critics say about the Superstar Ice Hockey action, strategy and on-ice moves:

"Superstar Ice Hockey is the best action-strategy sports simulation ever published. Period."

— Ahoy!

"It combines 3 distinctly different elements of professional

Fast realistic action

ice hockey—on-ice action, coaching and strategy, front office decision making—

into one very impressive package."

— Run Magazine



"...comes pretty close to capturing the mental excitement of the game."

— PC Magazine

"Superstar Ice Hockey is one of the



Complete league stats best sports simulations I've seen in a long time!"

— Family Computing

"The actual game has a nice feel to it, giving you the distinct

impression of actually being out there on the ice." — Computer Entertainer

"It's a crowd-pleasing software hat trick that scores with every shot!" — Commodore

See what all the excitement is about. Play Superstar Ice Hockey by SportTime yourself!

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Enter a World of Battle Strategy You Never Dreamed Possible!

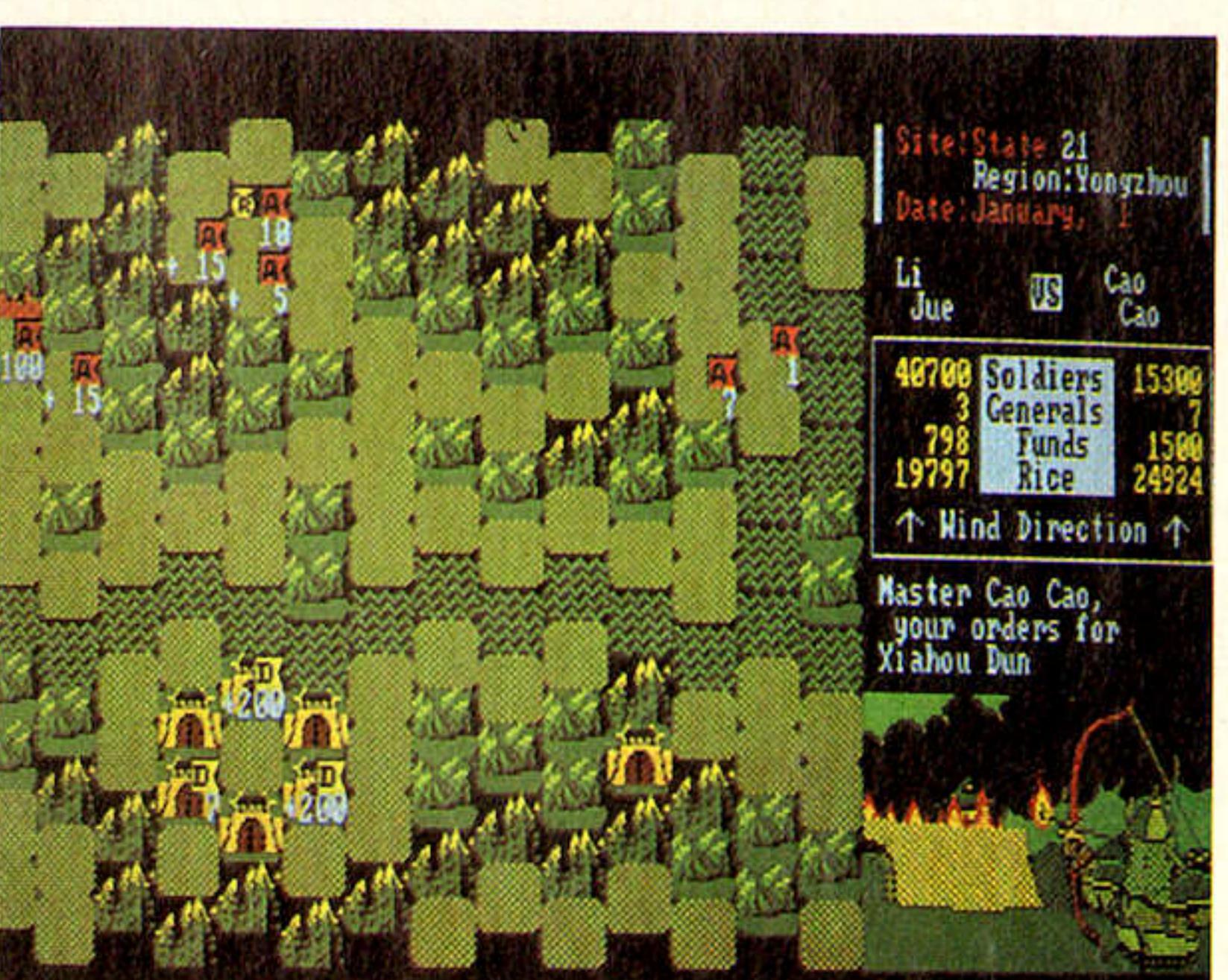
The Quest to Unify China

By J. L. Miller

ROMANCE OF THE THREE KINGDOMS is a military, economic and diplomatic simulation of China in the Second Century A.D. With game mechanics and graphics quite similar to **NOBUNAGA'S AMBITION** (cf. Computer Play No. 1, August 1988), the simulation is radically different in both game play and technique.

NOBUNAGA was a wargame cloaked in economics and diplomacy; **ROMANCE** is a more subtle diplomatic simulation emphasizing interpersonal relationships and role-playing characteristics.

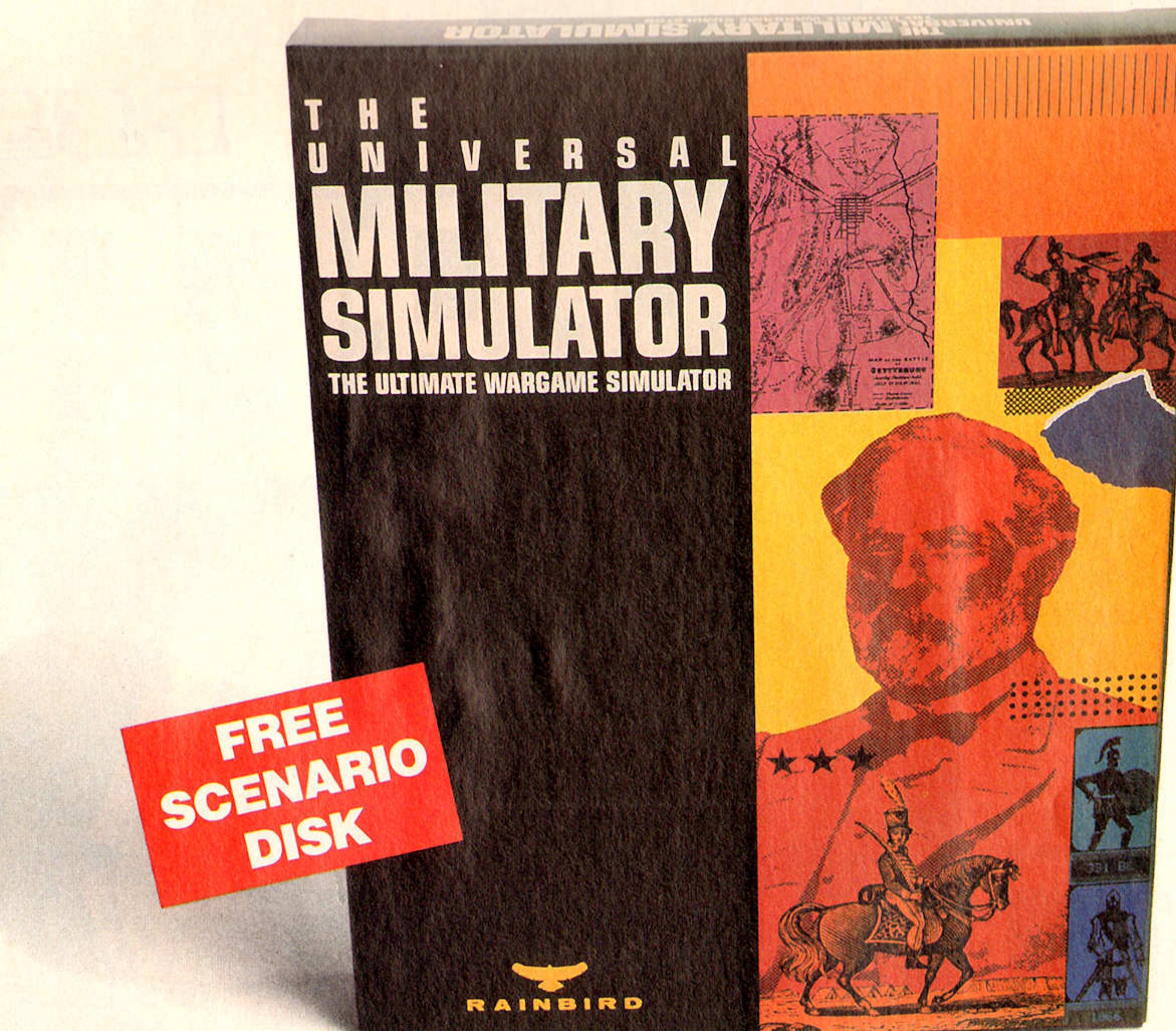
DOCUMENTATION



GAME PLAY

ROMANCE is much more of a role-playing game than **NOBUNAGA**. Designer Bill Swartz admits that many people who loved **NOBUNAGA** do not like **ROMANCE** and vice versa. **ROMANCE** is a more "Oriental" product; warfare does not yield victory. Instead, success comes to the player who is craftier and more adept at suborning generals from rival masters.

Initially, one must put his own house in order. Therefore, early commands tend to emphasize flood control and production. However, there are noticeable changes from **NOBUNAGA**; flood control and production may only be improved by small increments of funds. Large gold expenditures are merely wasted and the point of diminishing returns approaches quickly.



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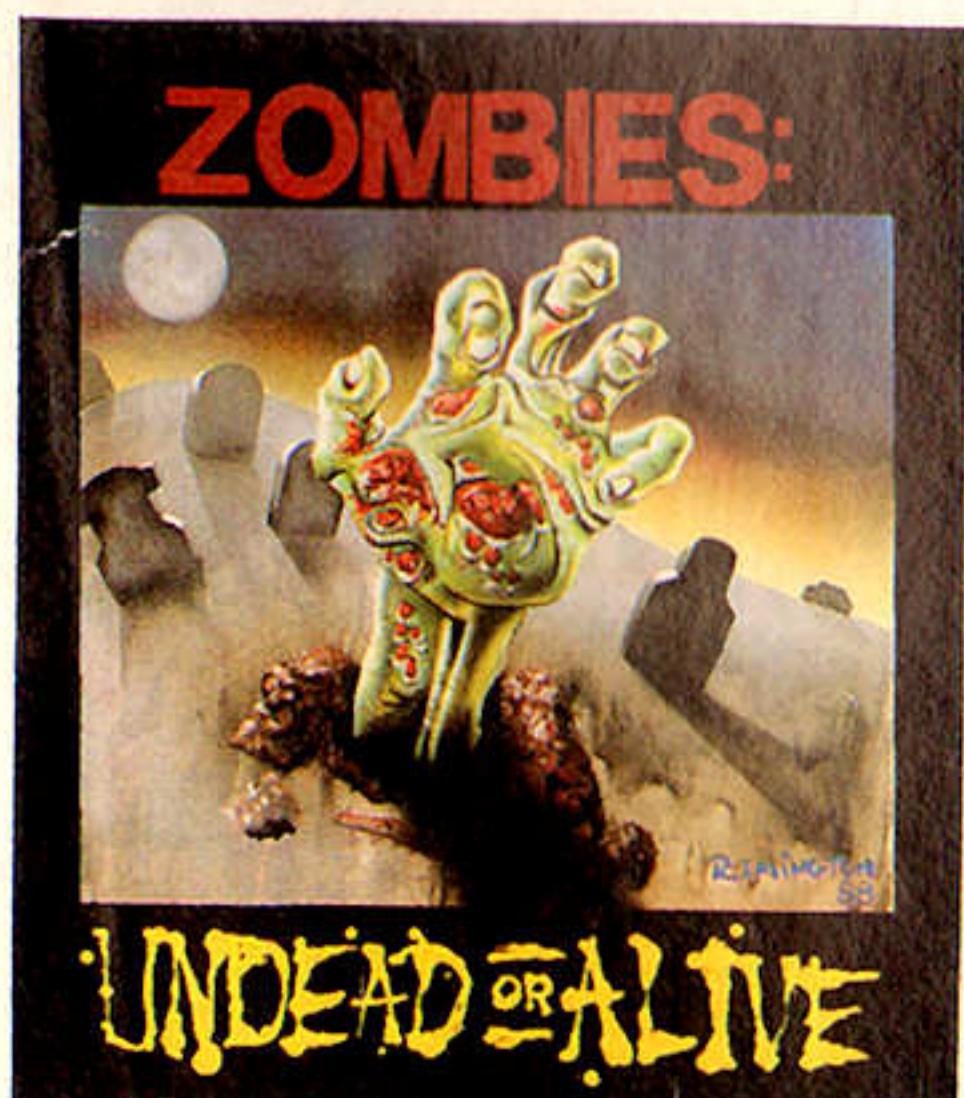
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◀ 8

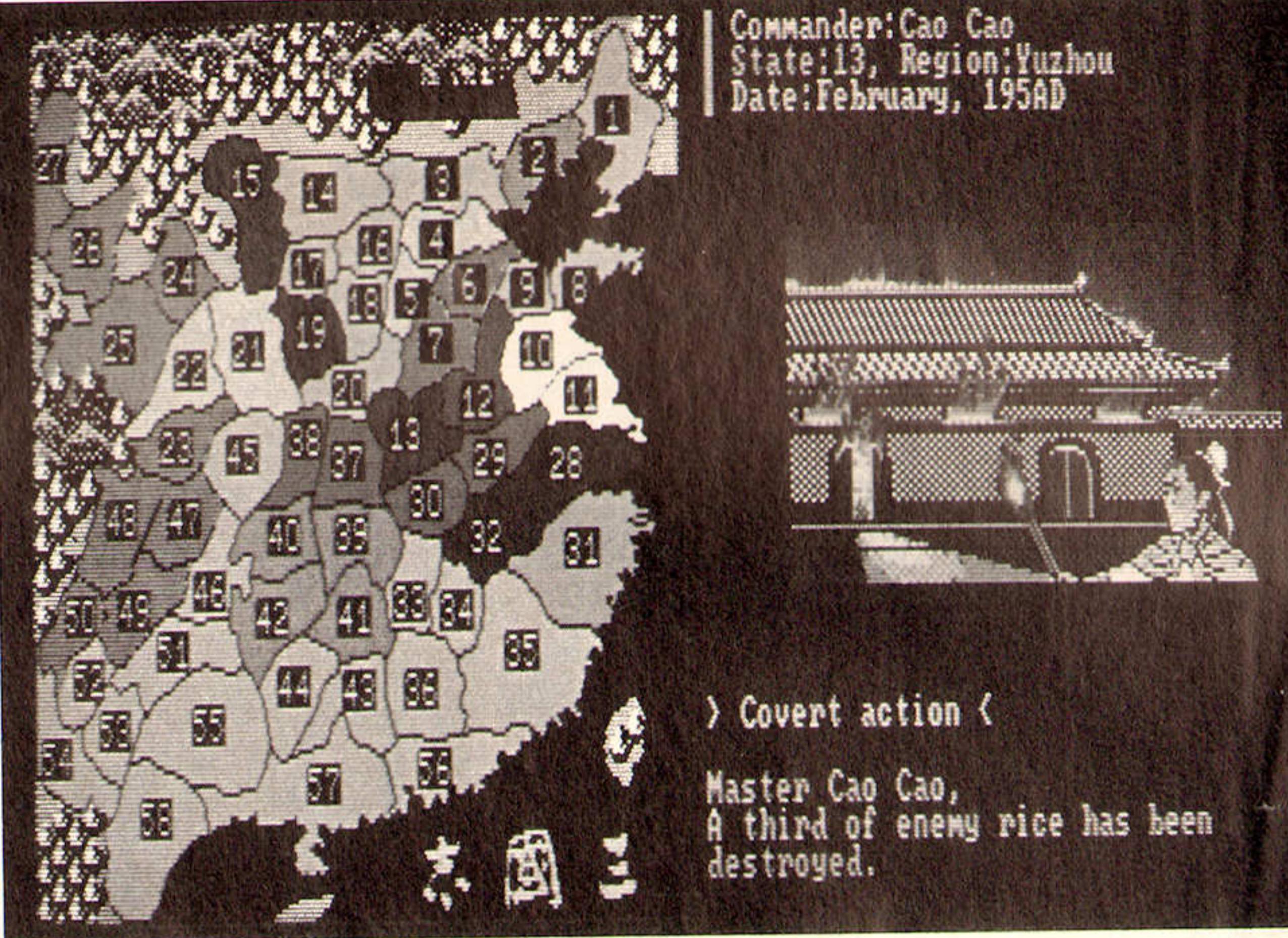
Instead, one must husband funds; these are difficult to replace and early spending can come back to doom the mid-game. Rice supplies are critical; their exhaustion can quickly doom an army to extinction. But with rice prices changing each season, an alert master can "play the market" and optimize both his funds and his rice supplies.

Loyalty of subordinates is a critical element; unless the generals are kept happy, they are susceptible to being recruited by rival masters. And even more important, if a subordinate ruling a separate province is lured into the enemy sphere, then you lose the entire province. But you can play the same game, and recruit enemy generals. The only problem is that their initial loyalty is rather low and until you can fill their hearts and minds with pudding plums of your own, these turncoats have a tendency to yo-yo between different masters. In event of war, their loyalty is such that their primary role is to lead the suicide troops; any reliance on their steadfastness will be futile.

WAR

War is a long, exhausting dirty business in ROMANCE. Given the openness of the terrain, the lack of zones of control and movement abilities, warfare can and often does drag on for months. Quick conquests of opposing masters will be rare; the more successful master will attempt to succeed by diplomacy and not warfare.

But when the worst cannot be avoided . . . Rice is often the determinant of victory. If the aggressor loses his rice supply, his army surrenders. Assaults can be made normally; however, these are lengthy and indecisive. Alternatively, trickery and incendiary attacks are much more successful. Trickery has a smaller effect than incendiary attacks which can destroy an entire army (assuming the wind direction is right). However, wind conditions change, and an optimal incendiary attack can sometimes turn into your own death trap.



tradition of the true role-playing games, its flavor and elements of success move it clearly into that sphere.

Therein lies the problem; the product does not appear to be a role-playing simulation. It looks akin to NOBUNAGA; enjoyment of one does not mean that the other will be a similar success. Given its pricing structure, one must determine where his interests lie before purchasing either program — NOBUNAGA for the wargamer/strategist; ROMANCE for the role-player/strategist.

Name: ROMANCE OF THE THREE KINGDOMS

Type: Strategy/Adventure

Format: IBM

Publisher: Koei

Designer: Bill Swartz

(American edition)

Ages: Teen — Adult

Requirements: CGA/EGA; 2 drives

Players: 1 through 8

Price: \$79.95

Ability level:

Advanced

Packaging:

Excellent (10)

Documentation:

Good (6.5)

Graphics/Text:

Excellent (9.0)

Realism:

Very Good (8.5)

Playability:

Good (7.0)

CP RATING:

7.16

Circle Reader Service Number 38.

The Easy Way to Play Music

JAM SESSION
all the musical thrills without the musical skills
by Bogas Productions
MACINTOSH 512K/PLUS/SE
Disk 512K
Mode
Entertainment

Broderbund

By Rusel DeMaria

These days, the trend in music is to make it easier and easier for anyone to play. Synthesizers have built-in rhythm and bass tracks, chords, and even whole songs programmed in. Several computer music products have allowed non-musicians to tinker with music in amusing ways while more serious music programs cater to trained musicians.

Perhaps the cleverest program for the non-musician and the musician alike is **JAM SESSION**. This program is fresh and delightful today, even though it has been on the market for some time. With it, you can "improvise" in various musical styles right at your Mac keyboard.

There was no question that I would be hooked right away when I saw the Django

Reinhardt hot jazz section. Since Django is one of my all time favorites, I instantly loaded that song and started right in with the hot riffs. It was strange and wonderful at the same time, and certainly impressed me. I was more engrossed with the music than the graphics and other effects, but, no doubt, you will want to know about the whole package.

When you begin **JAM SESSION**, you can select a song or play with the synthesizer.

The **JAM SESSION** synthesizer lets you experiment with different rhythms and instruments as well as a few special effects and harmonies like fifths and octaves, arpeggios (chords played in an open style, one note at a time with the rhythm), and some other effects. You can select one of six rhythms and the tempo of the music as well. You can record, save, and play back tunes using the synthesizer, so if you come up with some masterpiece of a melody, you can save it for posterity, or at least until the next time you play **JAM SESSION**. This part of the program is somewhat like having a small hand-held synthesizer, and playing it isn't too much fun, at least not compared to the rest of the program.

The most fun happens when you load a song. Each song is accompanied by a special screen that shows the musicians playing the piece. The musicians are animated and play the basic tracks. Whatever instrument you play, its on-screen musician will respond whenever you press a key, giving the illusion that the character on the screen is actually playing. In groups, different rows on the keyboard can control different musicians (and their instruments, of course). Even the riffs may change, depending on what part of the composition is playing. Everything is done to make you sound good.

As the basic composition plays, you fill in the riffs or single lines by pressing specific keys on the keyboard. Each row on the keyboard



controls a different set of riffs, and you can play riffs simultaneously on different rows. Done right, this can result in some nice harmonies and counterpoints, but, where it is true that the best results will come after you learn the riffs very well, this is especially true with multiple riffs. It's easy to make some kind of music that sometimes sounds very nice. It's much harder to put together a coherent song in which all riffs follow each other with musical certainty and taste.

If you think you've done particularly well, hit the π key for some canned applause. Since you can record the songs you jam with, the applause can give a spontaneous, live feeling, though the effect isn't likely to fool anyone. But you could use it like the canned laughter on sitcoms — to point out your especially wonderful moments.

Other options allow you to select Auto Play, in which you don't even have to play, (though you still can), show a piano keyboard (which shows which notes are currently playing), set the tempo, set the song length, turn on or off the audience responses at the beginning and end of the song, synchronize riffs to the measure (or not), and sequence riffs to have them play one after another (as opposed to the normal mode where a riff begins when you press the key, even cutting off another riff that was playing).

You can also make recordings of your own performances that can be played back by the companion program, Jam Player. You can copy Jam Player for your friends and give them copies of your masterpieces.

You may get the impression that **JAM SESSION** is just a little silly at times. Certainly it is an entertainment product more than a serious musical tool, but it does have interesting features that let you edit the riffs assigned to each key using a remarkably simple, but effective musical editor. Also, you can import and export between **JAM SESSION** and Studio Session for more serious music editing and playback. There are some limitations to what you can do importing from Studio Session to **JAM SESSION**, however.

In some cases, holding the Shift, Command, or Option keys will affect the music, causing the pitch to change, or playing an entirely new riff. Also, some riffs (or parts of them) are designed to repeat if you hold down a key, others have notes that sustain until you release the key.

I have to admit that most of the songs included don't interest me all that much musically, but the Django Djam song is a winner in my book, and makes the program worth it. Each user will have his or her own tastes, of course, so if you like country or

rock or classical, or reggae or heavy metal or latin, there's probably a song for you.

By the way, most Macs don't have much in the way of speakers, and the sound from a stock Mac Plus is anything but inspiring. That's why Broderbund has given a list of ways to plug in headphones, speakers, and stereo equipment to your Mac complete with part numbers for Radio Shack adapters. With the sound coming through a more sophisticated speaker system, the effect is much improved, and it's worth the extra effort to set up an external system.

The manual for this product is succinct, but complete, and serves as a model for brief but effective documentation. The program is easy to use, and the results are, well . . . the results are all your own.

Circle Reader Service Number 39.

Name: **JAM SESSION**

Type: Music

Format: Macintosh

Publisher: Broderbund Software

Designer: Ed Bogas

Ages: 9 and up

Players: one (and the band)

Requirements: At least 512K RAM

Price: \$49.95

Ability level: ranges Easy to Advanced
Packaging: Average (7)

Very Good (8)

Excellent (8.8)

Very Good (8.5)

CP RATING:

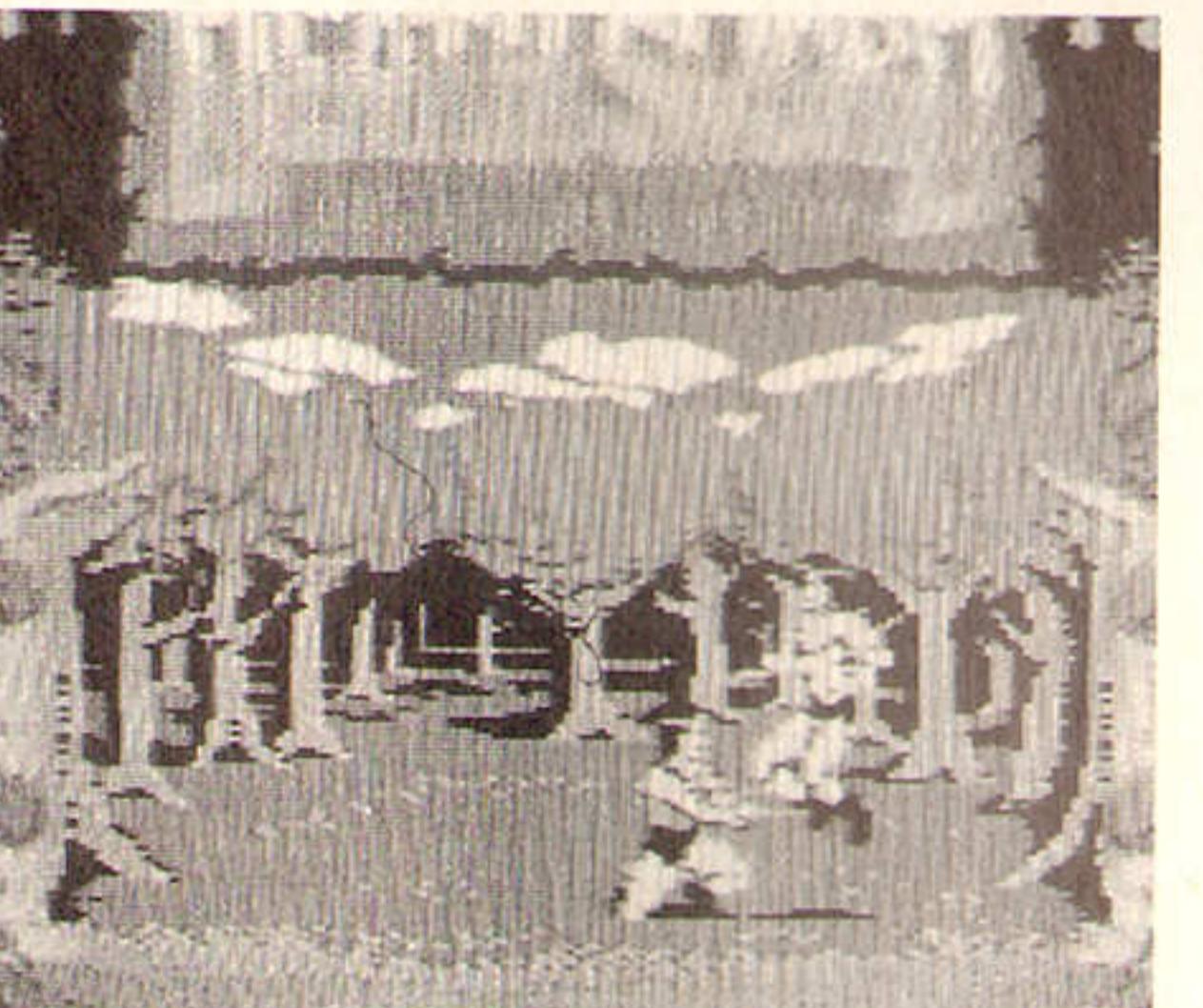
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A Duel to the Death

By Rawson Stovall



During a recent all-night gaming vigil I came across a game that I simply lost my head over. Literally.

Let me explain . . . My friend and I had started the day with the ultimate strategy game — Mindscape's **BALANCE OF POWER** for the Atari ST. Then we moved to the Atari ST version of the "wargame of the century" — Intersel's **EMPIRE**, followed by an intriguing round of Activision's addictive-puzzle game **SHANGAI** for the C-64. Last of all, we tackled Scrabble, (no computer here, just the classic boardgame). After what I figure to be ten hours of constant mind-bending, we were ready for a change of pace. Then we saw it . . . **DEATH SWORD** by Epyx's Maxx Out! series. We looked at the back of the package. The beginning line read, "First the white plague, now this . . ." We saw four different pictures of barbarian guys clanging swords together. It appeared to be just the sort of mindless game (no pun intended) that we now wanted to play.

We then studied the story line. It seems that the evil sorcerer Drax had staged a coup over the Warm Country by imprisoning Princess Mariana and doing in her father, Heraldo, the true ruler. Only after Drax seized power did he let Mariana go. But then, he kidnapped her once again so that she could be his future bride.

The player assumed the role of Gorth, son of Toth, the King of the Northlands. One day Gorth journeys into the Warmlands, the neighboring kingdom where he hears of the horror story involving Princess of Mariana. Gorth decides to save the damsel in distress, but first he must make it past the evil sorcerer's henchmen. As the hero Gorth begins his mission, Drax laughs, "Can you last hero? Can you last? Or will you become pet food just like the others???

"We inserted the disk into my Atari 520 ST. We selected the practice mode. This meant that we could practice by fighting each other before we went ahead with our mission. The first thing that struck us about the game was the crisp, colorful, almost cartoon - quality graphics.

the joystick in certain directions. Pushing up while pressing the button made the barbarian do a neck chop and pushing to the upper left while pressing the button produced the dreaded web of death. We could play against a computer swordsman or against each other. The controls took a little getting used to but we were soon "masters" at the art of sword clashing, producing battles that looked as if they were choreographed.

Only then did it happen. My friend pushed the joystick left while he pressed the button to create a flying neck chop. With a "Sklerk!" off went my head. We were dumbfounded as it bounced to the ground. We roared hysterically. A little green 'lizard thing' then walked onto the screen. It dragged my headless body off into the bushes to do God-knocks-what with it. As an added touch of disregard for human life, it kicked my still bleeding head out of the way. My head bounced twice. Despite the violence, the game was simple and a bit gory, but we loved it!!

Like the controls of Epyx's **WORLD KARATE CHAMPIONSHIP** or Spinnaker's **KUNG FU: THE WAY OF THE EXPLODING FIST**, we made our killer moves by moving

Name: DEATH SWORD
Type: Arcade/Simulation
Formats: IBM, APPLE, C64 AMIGA, ST
Publisher: Published by Palace Software, Distributed by Epyx, Inc.
Designer: Steve Brown
Ages: 7 and up.
Requirements: C64, St, Amiga:
Joysticks Apple: 128K, Double hi-res.
Number of players: 1, or 2
Price: \$29.95

Difficulty level: Above average
Packaging: Average (5)
Documentation: Average (5)
Graphics: Excellent (9)
Realism: Very Good (8)
Playability: Excellent (10)
CP RATING: 8.6

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Computer Play

Action and Strategy over the Waves



By Rusel Demaria

The Pegasus class hydrofoil is one of the fastest and most maneuverable craft afloat these days. Its combination of power and flexibility make it an excellent anti-terrorist ship, and this unique boat is the star of the show in **PHM PEGASUS** from LUCASFILM GAMES.

For those familiar with ocean-going games, **PHM PEGASUS** borrows somewhat from popular submarine games like **GATO** and **SILENT SERVICE**, but it also adds elements of its own.

For those not familiar with the genre, submarine games set during World War II have sent many a game player on dangerous missions of strategy and destruction. Generally, you would have a pre-defined objective and would have to use all the abilities of your

craft as well as a good deal of skill and strategy to accomplish your goals.

In **PHM PEGASUS**, you have the same general scenario, but this time you must travel above the surface, and you must combat more modern enemies like terrorists and drug runners as a member of TAG (Terrorist Action Group). Another difference is that,

while earlier scenarios had you attacking all enemies, Pegasus has several scenarios in which your goal is to refrain from firing, and in some cases you must identify the guilty from the innocent. For instance, in one campaign, you must find four drug running speed boats by pulling up next to them and searching, but you can't shoot them — the press would hang you out to dry.

Of course, for fans of destruction and death, there are plenty of scenarios to play where you have to shoot fast and often.

19 ►

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TOM CLANCY'S THE HUNT FOR RED OCTOBER



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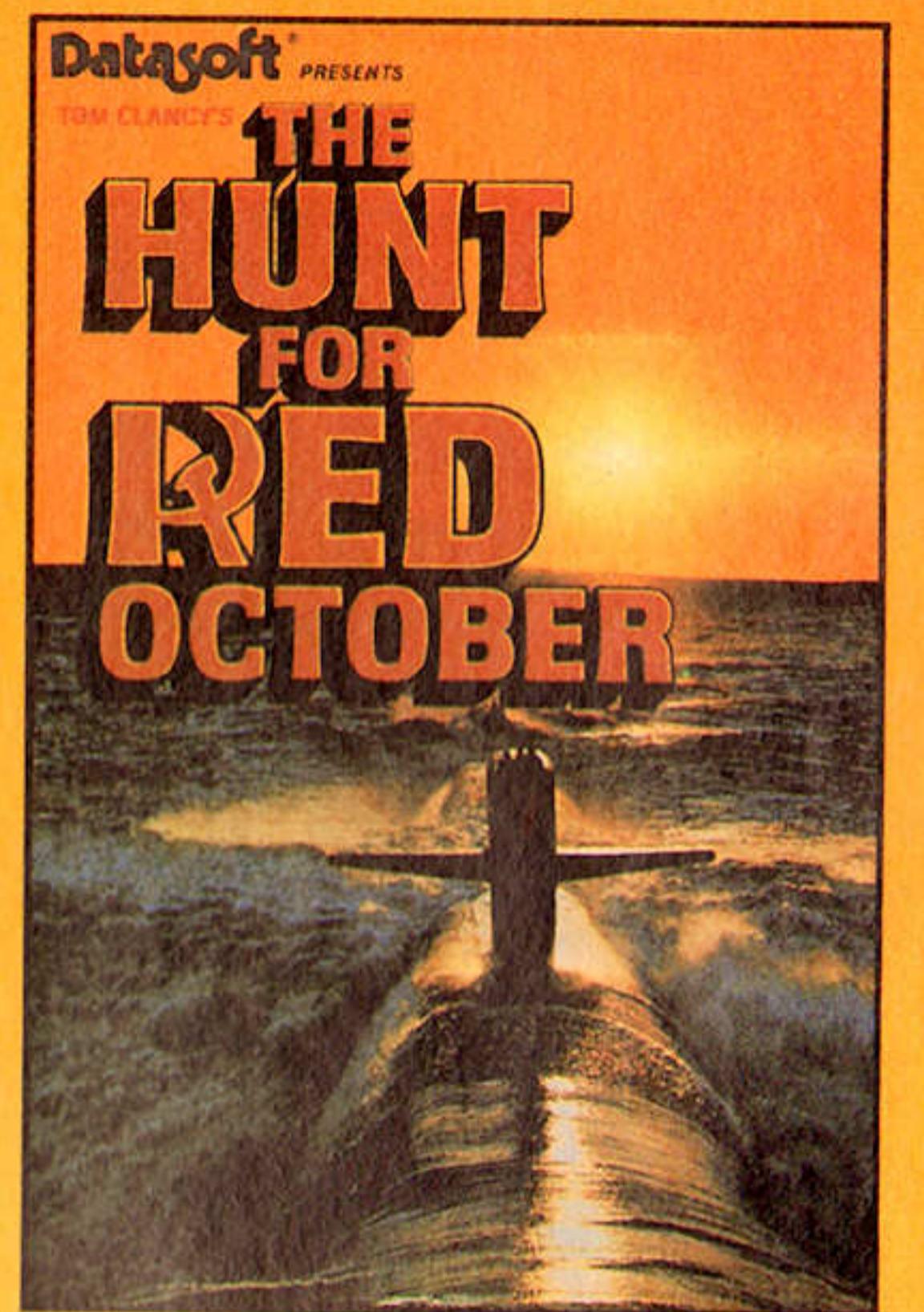
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You will want to use the time compression keys to speed up the game since everything happens in pseudo-real time. As in real life, a lot of time is simply spent cruising the open seas without incident. But as soon as a new blip hits your radar, you had better return the time compression to zero fast, or you may find yourself staring down the maw of an oncoming missile with barely enough time to take defensive action!

◀ 16

On some missions, you also have a helicopter that can scout ahead of your radar to help you find other ships and keep tabs on faraway enemy craft. Also on some missions, you will have access to a cargo ship which can rearm you one time during the mission. You may well need the extra fire power as those missiles and chaff rockets get used up awfully fast during an intense battle.

What I like best about this game is that not all missions are designed to get you into a fight. In many, you fail the mission if you destroy any ships, and learning restraint is sometimes the hardest lesson. But then, some of the fast and furious action during the battle sequences is exhilarating and very challenging. Since you have a limited number of missiles, you have to learn when to use the deck gun and when to shoot the missiles. You have to learn to lead a far off target, since the cannon shells take time to reach their target. The long range missiles are more accurate and can reach over longer distances. Too bad you don't have more of them, but then, where's the challenge in that?

Chaff rockets present a special challenge of their own. You use them to fool enemy missiles, but they are only really effective if you shoot them at just the right time — when the enemy missile is about a mile away. Sooner, and the missile is not fooled. Later, and it's too late!

Name: **PHM PEGASUS**

Type: Strategy
Formats: Apple II, IBM
Publisher: Lucasfilm Games
Designer: Noah Falstein
Ages: 10 and up
Players: One
Requirements: Joystick Optional
Price: \$39.95

Ability level: Easy to Advanced
(depending on scenario)

Packaging: Good (8)
Documentation: Excellent (9.5)
Graphics/Text: Good (7.5)
Playability: Excellent (9.5)

CP RATING: 8.85

Circle Reader Service Number 55.

Each mission is unique, and your success is measured in terms of the mission objective. At the end of each mission, you receive a set of scores for achieving your objective, for sinking enemy vessels, for damaged enemies, time remaining, and a survival bonus, if you make it out alive. You then receive a rank ranging from Deck Mopper to Admiral. You can only achieve the highest ranks on the hardest scenarios.

PHM PEGASUS is challenging and fun, and the manual is typical of Lucasfilm manuals — full of interesting fact and information. This simulation is especially satisfying because it is based on real world events, not past history (though there is one fanciful mission on the IBM version that has you transported to the past to engage the monster Nazi ship, the Bismarck, but that is an exception).

The reality of this game is no accident. In conversations with its designer, Noah Falstein, I learned that a good deal of study went into this game, and that missions closely parallel real events. Enemy ships will behave much the same way in this game as they would behave in the Persian Gulf, for instance.

In summary, **PHM PEGASUS** is a game full of action, strategy, and a good dose of realism. If you like the idea of cruising at a max speed of 40 knots in one of the ocean's most formidable weapons, you'll probably like **PHM PEGASUS**.

An Oldie But Goodie



By Fred Blechman

In August of 1950 I earned my wings as a Naval Aviator and was assigned to Fighter Squadron 14 (VF-14), the "Tophatters", as part of Air Group One based at Cecil Field in Jacksonville, Florida. We flew single-seat F4U-5 Corsairs, the last of the prop-driven carrier-based fighters. Until I left the Navy in late 1952, we went on 12 carrier cruises of varying lengths in the Mediterranean and Caribbean - and lost six pilots in non-combat accidents.

After I left the Navy I built and flew radio-controlled model airplanes for several years in the late 1950s. There were no personal computers in those days, and dinky Link Trainers were the closest thing to flight simulators. So it's not a surprise that I've become a collector of flight simulator programs in the last few years - especially since getting my IBM PC/XT.

Although "HELLCAT ACE" was one of Micro-

Prose's first products, originally released over five years ago, it is one of my favorite flight simulators. If you enjoy arcade-type shoot-'em-up action, you are in danger of spending many, many hours with **HELLCAT ACE**. It is sufficiently challenging to keep your attention, yet capable of being mastered.

Equipment Required

I reviewed the IBM PC version of **HELLCAT ACE**, which requires at least 128K of RAM, a color graphics adapter, and a 360K disk drive. A joystick is listed as optional - but don't plan on using this program without one. There are also versions of **HELLCAT ACE** for the Commodore 64/128 and early Atari machines.

Description

HELLCAT ACE is an exciting and challenging three-dimensional combat flying simulation of World War II air battles in the Pacific. The object is to maneuver into a machine gun firing position on the enemy aircraft and shoot it down. The firing position must take into account the distance and angle from the target, as well as the direction the target is moving, so as to provide the proper "lead deflection" on the target. (It's not where the target is when you fire, but where it is when the bullets get there!) To make it even more challenging, the enemy aircraft can outmaneuver you, get on your tail, and shoot you down!

The game features bailouts, ocean ditching, limited ammunition, night missions and complete acrobatic capability. The short 8-page manual, which was actually written for the Commodore 64 version and includes an insert for IBM PC use, is adequate without being elaborate.

Flying HELLCAT ACE

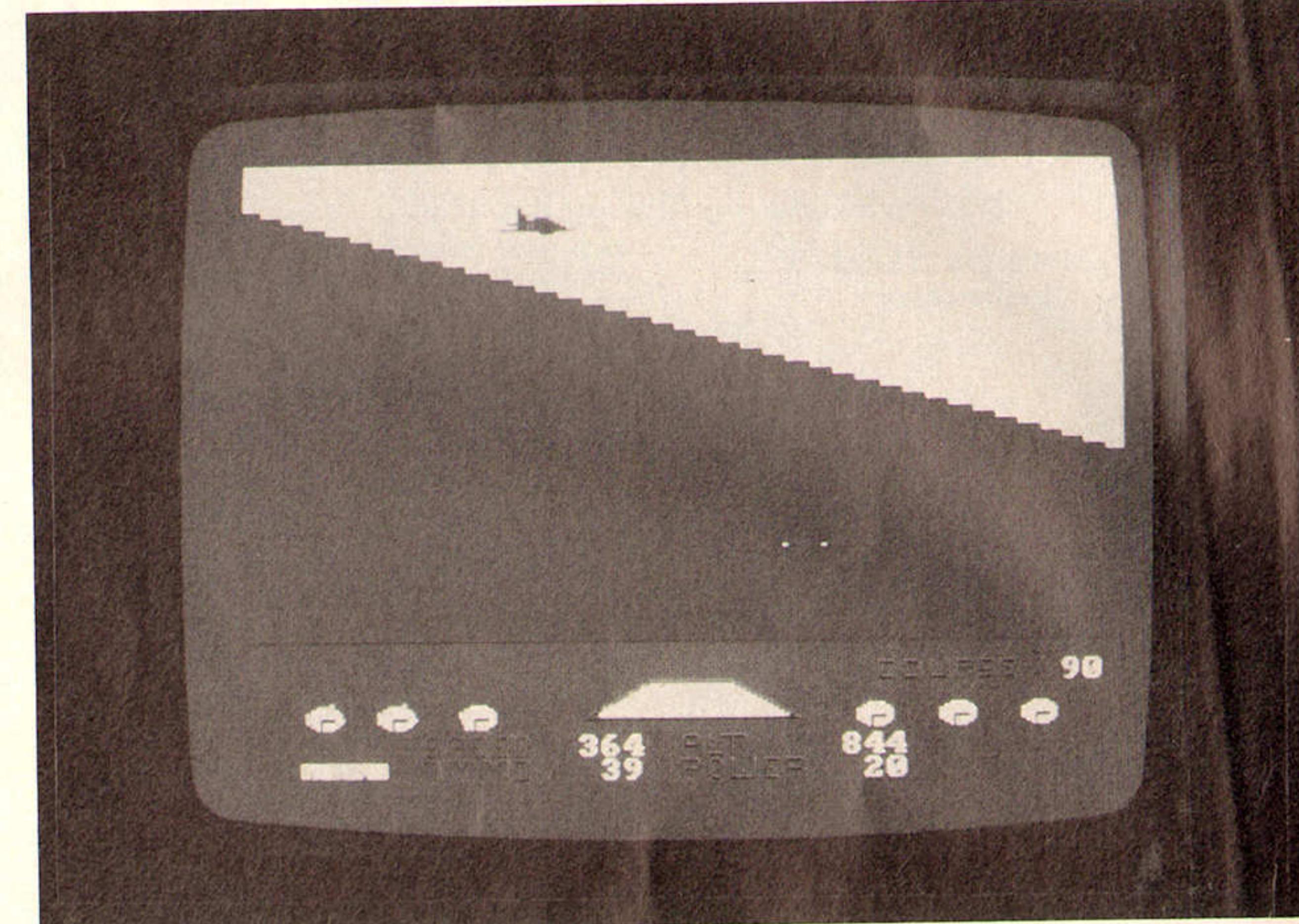
I have both a Hercules and a CGA board in my IBM PC/XT, which usually causes programs confusion. **HELLCAT ACE**, however, is intelligent enough to select the CGA board on booting up from the protected disk. After an introductory screen, you are allowed to select one of 15 missions.

A typical mission scenario, described in the documentation, reads: "WAKE ISLAND - December 11, 1941. The first carrier battle of the war. You are flying an F4F Wildcat fighter on combat patrol over the fleet. You drop to intercept a bomber beginning a low altitude torpedo run on the carrier YORKTOWN. If he sinks the carrier you will have no place to land." There's also a Grand Finale - "Defeat the Japanese Air Force!"

Although listed as an option, a joystick is really a "must" for this program, and a screen (just after choosing your first mission) allows calibration of the joystick. When used with the keyboard cursor keys the plane response is sluggish, but with a joystick the acrobatic response is spectacular! Furthermore, the plane itself is remarkably stable. You can do rolls with the nose right on the horizon all the way through, without applying forward stick when inverted. In this respect, **HELLCAT ACE** is much easier to fly than a real plane.

The targets, which have various shapes to represent different airplanes, move randomly around the screen, and get larger as you get closer. You attempt to get your gunsight on the target and hold it there while you fire. You can see the tracers from your wing guns, together with speaker clicks to indicate firing. If you hit the target it "explodes", accompanied by a whistling sound, then a victory tune and another Japanese flag credited on the screen. When you are shot down or crash, the screen flutters furiously, followed by a melody and the American flag on the screen "in memorium".

There are lots of other features I really liked. The program defaults, when ignored, to an auto-



matic demo mode that is fascinating to watch and includes victories and defeats. The program shows scores after each victory or defeat, since this really is an arcade game with up to four players and three selectable difficulty levels. While you're flying, the speaker simulates engine noise, which changes with speed. As you shoot down enemy planes, each one gets tougher, and it takes considerable practice to become an ace (five victories.)

The only view is through the windshield. Although no instrument panel is shown, a status panel lists speed, altitude, ammo and power. Most important is the rear-view mirror. When there's an enemy fighter on your tail, as seen in the mirror, you get shot down if you don't do an Immelmann or Split-S to get away from him and onto his tail. If you do get shot down, you supposedly can bail out before crashing, to perhaps fly another day - but I never got the bailout feature to work when I needed it.

Another unique feature of **HELLCAT ACE** is the BOSS key. When you press this key, a spreadsheet appears on your screen - in case the Boss comes walking by while you're over Iwo Jima (or in any of the other scenarios.)

As for monitors, the RGB monitor colors (blue sea, white sky, red targets, cyan status panel) left something to be desired. Red targets against the blue sea are hard to spot. Also, the status panel values and some of the menu selections were hard to read. The composite color monitor was even worse. The best display is on a composite monochrome monitor with the brightness and contrast controls set to show three brightness levels on black.

I don't understand why this program is not more well known in the IBM PC world, although I understand it is popular in the earlier Atari and Commodore versions. This is less "cerebral" than other flight simulator programs I've tested, with no real thinking involved, but lots of raw action. I think **MicroProse Software** has a real winner here! "Spitfire Ace", also from **MicroProse**, is essentially the same program, but with Europe as the warzone.

Name: HELLCAT ACE
Type: Flight Simulation
Formats: IBM PC/XT/Jr., Commodore 64/128, Atari 8-bit
Publisher: MicroProse
Designer: R. Donald Awalt
Ages: 6 to adult
Requirements: CGA graphics
Players: One to four
Price: \$34.95

Ability Level: Beginner to Intermediate Excellent (9)
Packaging: Average (5.5)
Documentation: Very Good (8)
Graphics: Excellent (9)
Realism: Excellent (9.5)
Playability: Excellent (9.5)

CP RATING: 8.6
Circle Reader Service Number 41.

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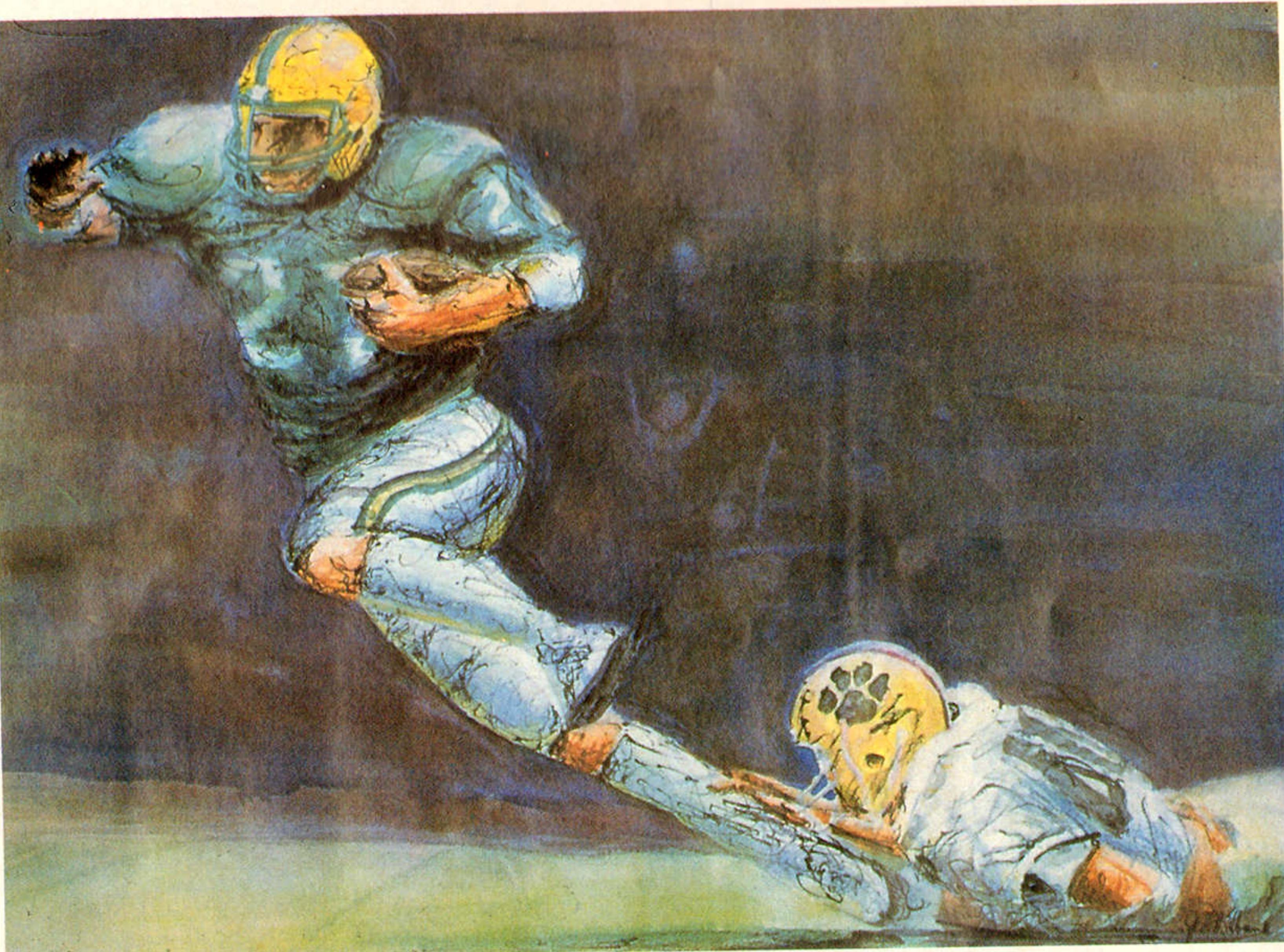
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Sports Game Special



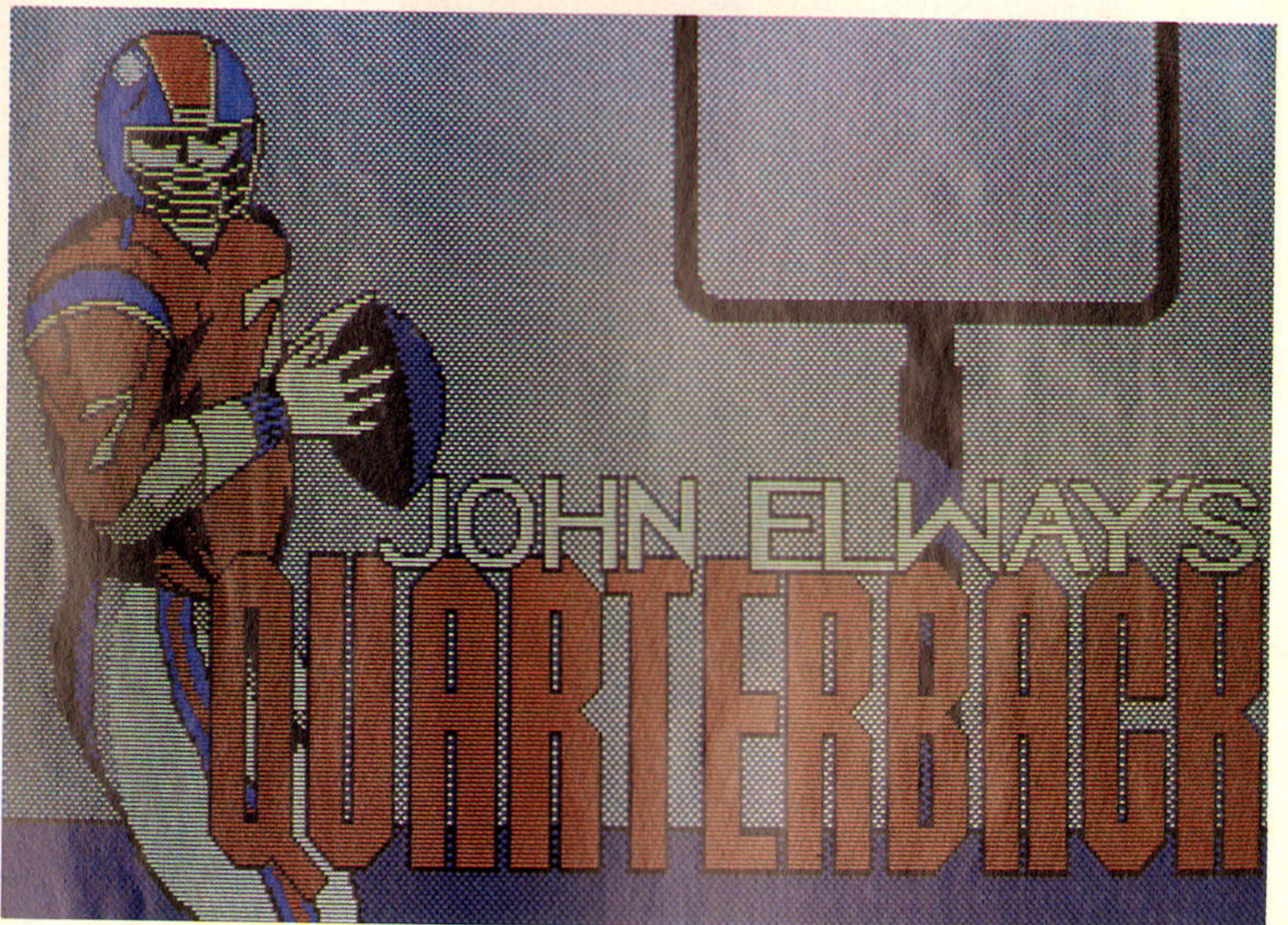
Welcome to the first special editorial section featured in these pages. Since we're at the beginning of the football season, just about to start the baseball playoffs and not far away from basketball starting, we figured this was the perfect time to feature a special section on sports.

We didn't include every sport — just the aforementioned three, although one of our reviewers slipped in a golf game that was deserving of mention. We tried to find the best games in each sport including both new releases and previously released titles. We hope we succeeded but let us know if you think we missed something and we'll cover it in a future issue.

There's also a listing at the end of this section of games that we didn't review because of space limitations. If you'd like more information on the games in this listing, or for that matter, any game in this issue, just use the reader service card between pages 16 and 17. Or write or call the companies directly using the addresses and phone numbers from the list on page 59.

We hope you enjoy this section and the sections we've planned for upcoming issues. Next month you can read about flight simulators, hardware for games will be in December's special buyer's guide and a wargame retrospective is January's feature. So keep reading every month for the best in computer game reporting and make sure you let us know what you think of COMPUTER PLAY.

The Quarterback Makes the Difference



By Rusel DeMaria

Nobody said playing quarterback would be easy, but the fruits of success are generally measured in six or seven figures.

JOHN ELWAY'S QUARTERBACK gives you the opportunity to earn the big bucks, at least as far as this simulation is concerned. You begin with a modest salary of around \$260,000, but who knows what kind of figure you can attain with a solid performance in the game.

In many ways, this game is like many other football simulations. You control the quarterback and/or ball carrier during offense, the middle linebacker during defense, and you pick from among nine possible offensive or six defensive plays each down. You can also reverse the direction of the offense to throw off your opponent.

Offensive plays include three run plays (sneak, draw, or sweep) and six passing plays (screen, action, lookie, post, shotgun, and an Elway favorite, the bomb). Defensive alignments include the goal line, standard run, stunt, blitz, zone, and prevent. Once you pick

the appropriate play, you must execute it, and that's where the real fun begins.

Each play begins at the line of scrimmage. The opposing team, computer-controlled or human, has picked a defensive alignment and you have picked your play. The computer synthesized voice barks out the signals "Hut... Hut... Hut HUT!" and the center snaps the ball. You peddle back into the pocket searching for a receiver who might be open, assessing the coverage. You see a possible weakness and now you wait for the play to unfold. In the meantime, if you're good, you watch the pass rush. You don't want to get caught by surprise and sacked!

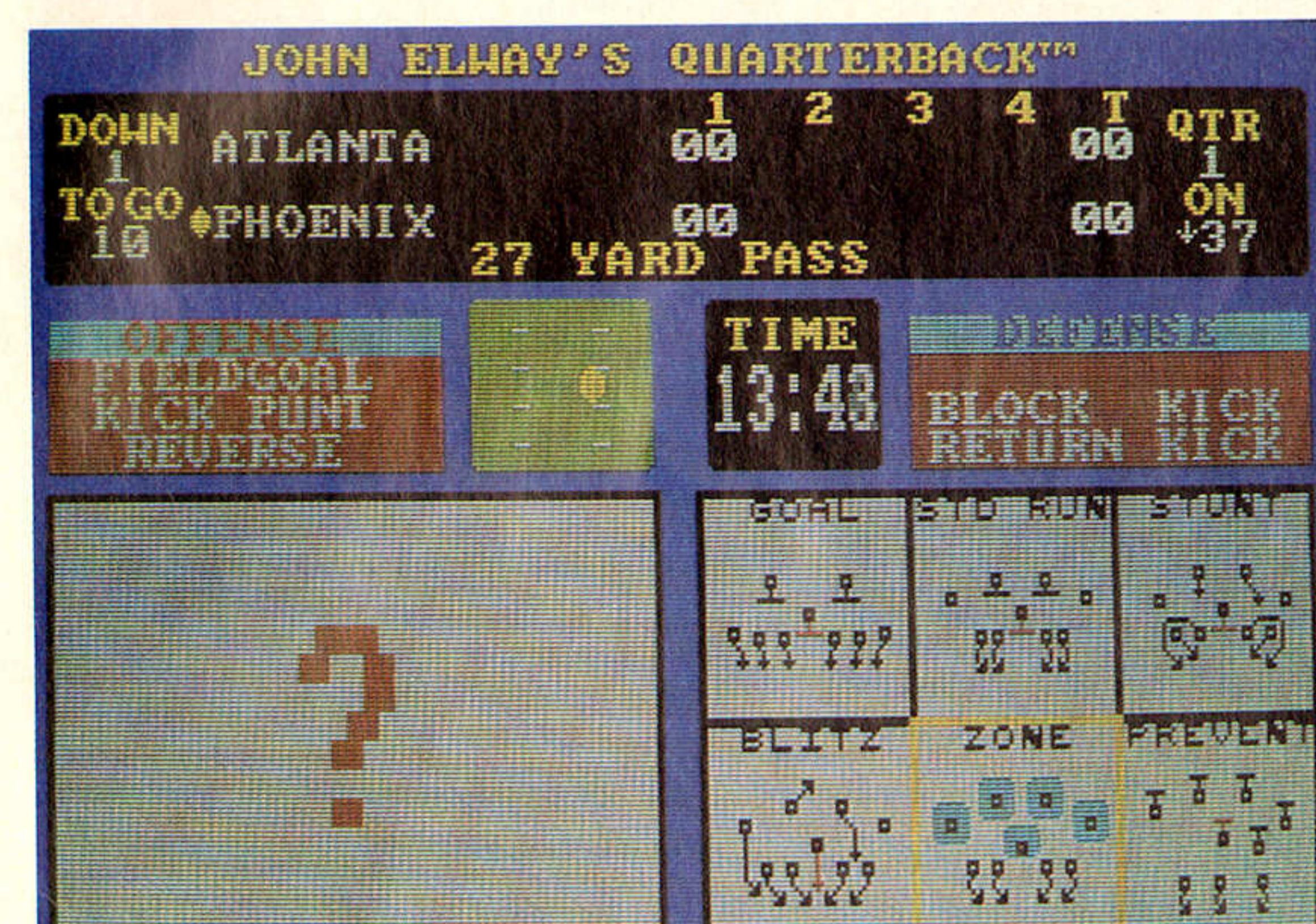
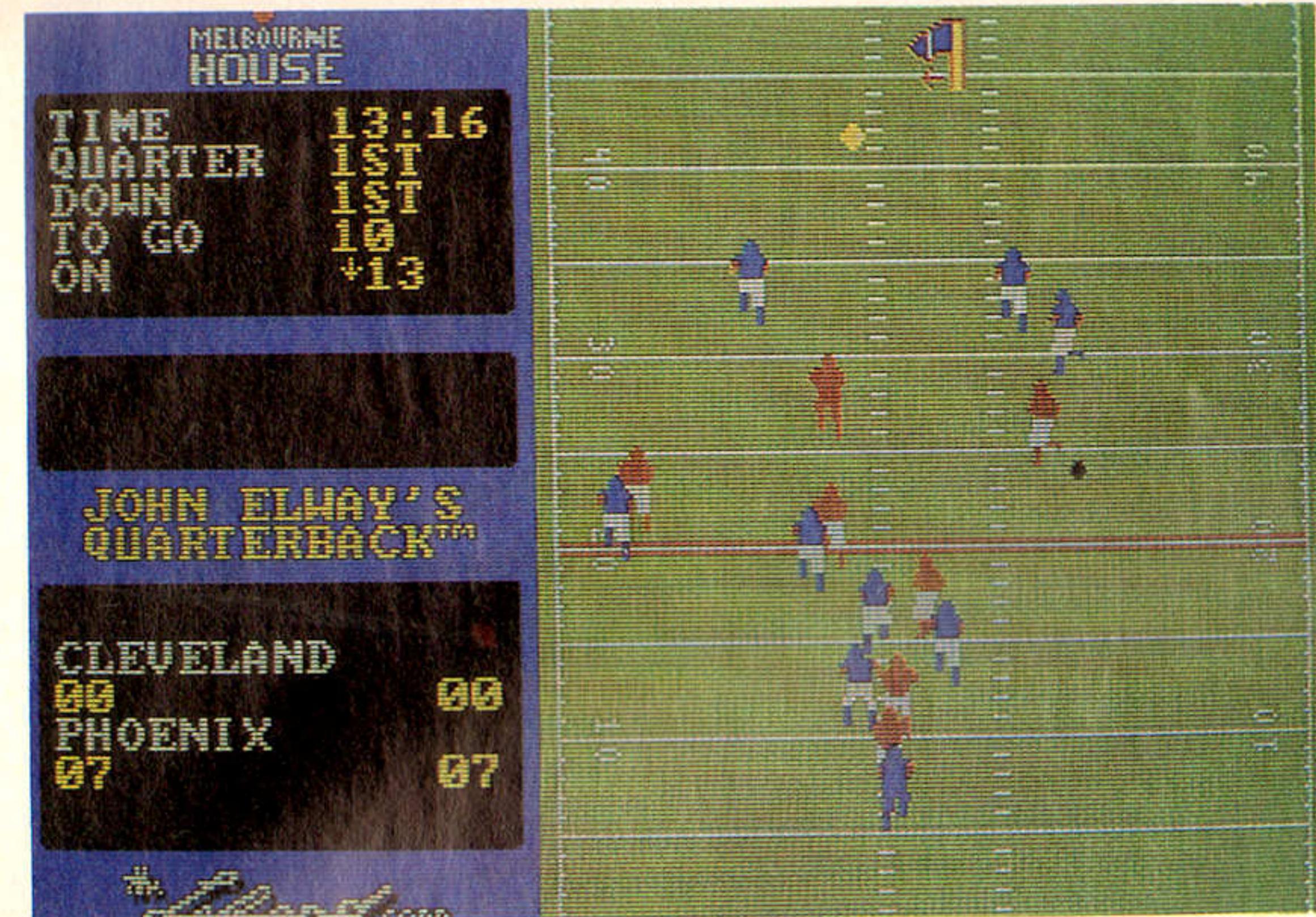
Finally you see your wide receiver breaking into his pattern. You press the pass button, position the aiming arrow just ahead of your receiver, then release the button — moments before the on-rushing defensive end crashes into you. The ball sails gracefully through the air heading right for the spot you chose. The receiver closes in on the ball, but so do the defenders. They converge; the

ball is knocked up into the air. It seems to hover there, up for grabs, then, finally, falls harmlessly to the ground.

"Incomplete," rasps the computer voice. Oh well. Next time you know, you'll need to lead the receiver more. At least it wasn't an interception.

Playing defense isn't as much fun, but you can use the middle linebacker to spoil your opponent's strategy. For instance, call a blitz, but keep the linebacker back to cover any free receivers. Then, even if the quarterback gets the ball off, you may be able to break up the play. Chances are your coverage will make him hesitate and get sacked for a nice 12 yard loss.

The graphics on this game are pretty good, though the players are a bit small on the screen. There are a lot of statistics taking up about a third of the screen, and it might have been better to devote the entire screen to the action, then show stats after the play. The EGA version is slightly better than the CGA,



There are some very definite differences between this game and the real game of football. For one thing, there are only nine men per team as opposed to the normal eleven. There are also no penalties, and no handoffs (the quarterback handles all running plays). These differences do not detract too much from the game, though I miss the handoffs most.

Playing this game well involves good strategy, above all, and a mastery of the various keys and techniques used during game play. The manual contains a section on football basics, a glossary, some strategy specific to the computer game, and play diagrams. However, I found the explanations of the passing and kicking techniques a little confusing. The procedural part of the manual could be improved.

Finally, this game is copy protected and does not include an option to install on a hard disk, but requires that you reboot with the main disk in drive A:. This means that you have no way of backing up the game in case something happens to your disk.

Name: John Elway's Quarterback

Publisher: Melbourne House

Type: Simulation

Formats: IBM, Others soon

Ages: 8-80

Players: One or two

Requirements: Graphics Display (CGA, Tandy-1000, EGA, MCGA, or Hercules); joystick optional but recommended
Price: \$44.95

Ability level:

Average (7)

Packaging:

Average (7)

Documentation:

Average (7)

Graphics/Text:

Average (7)

Playability:

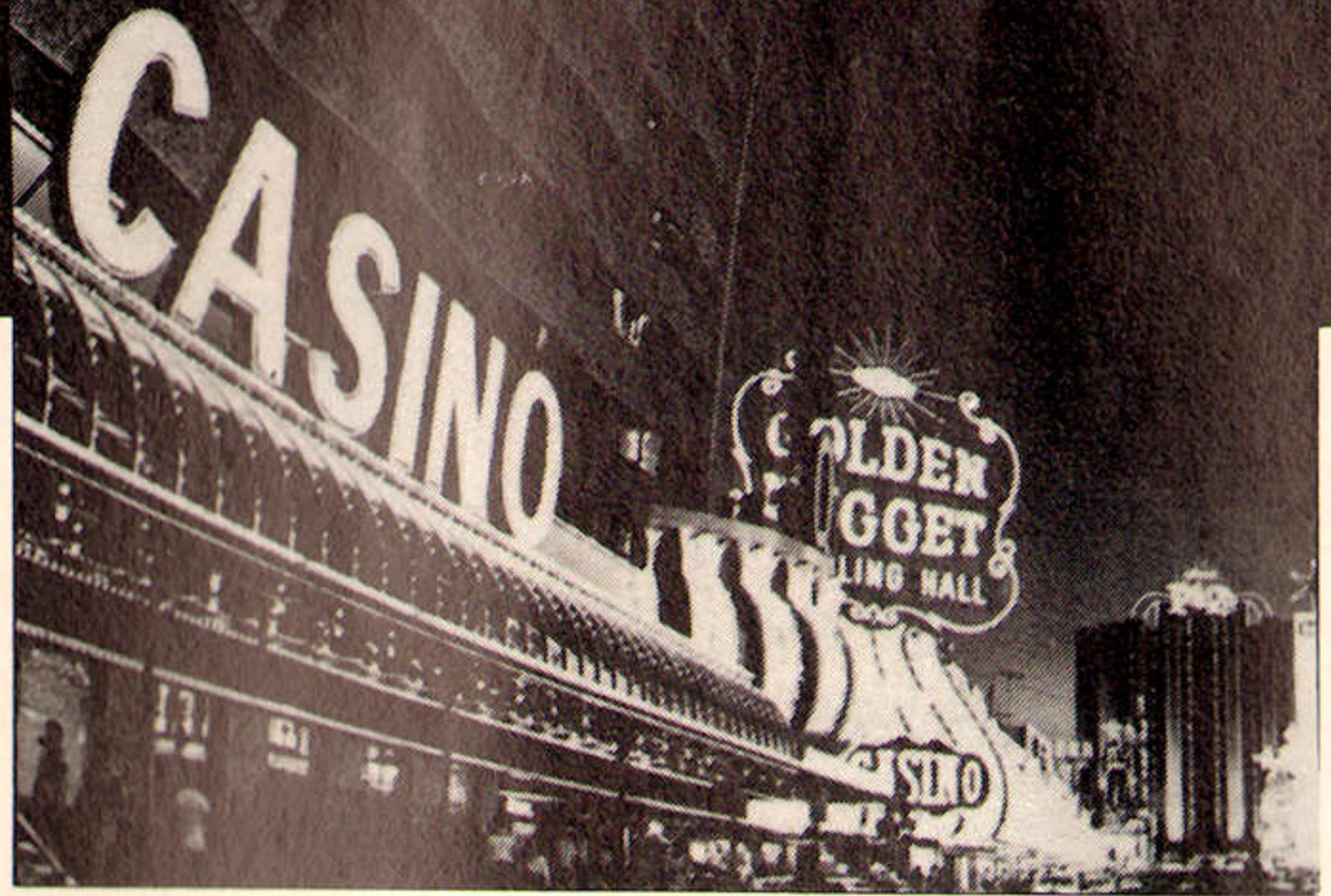
Good (8)

CP RATING:

7.5

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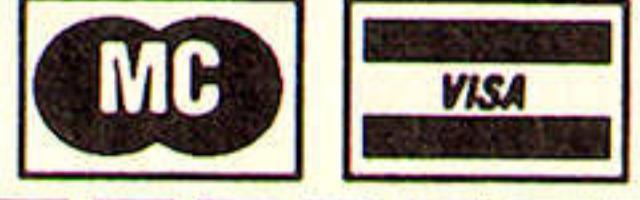
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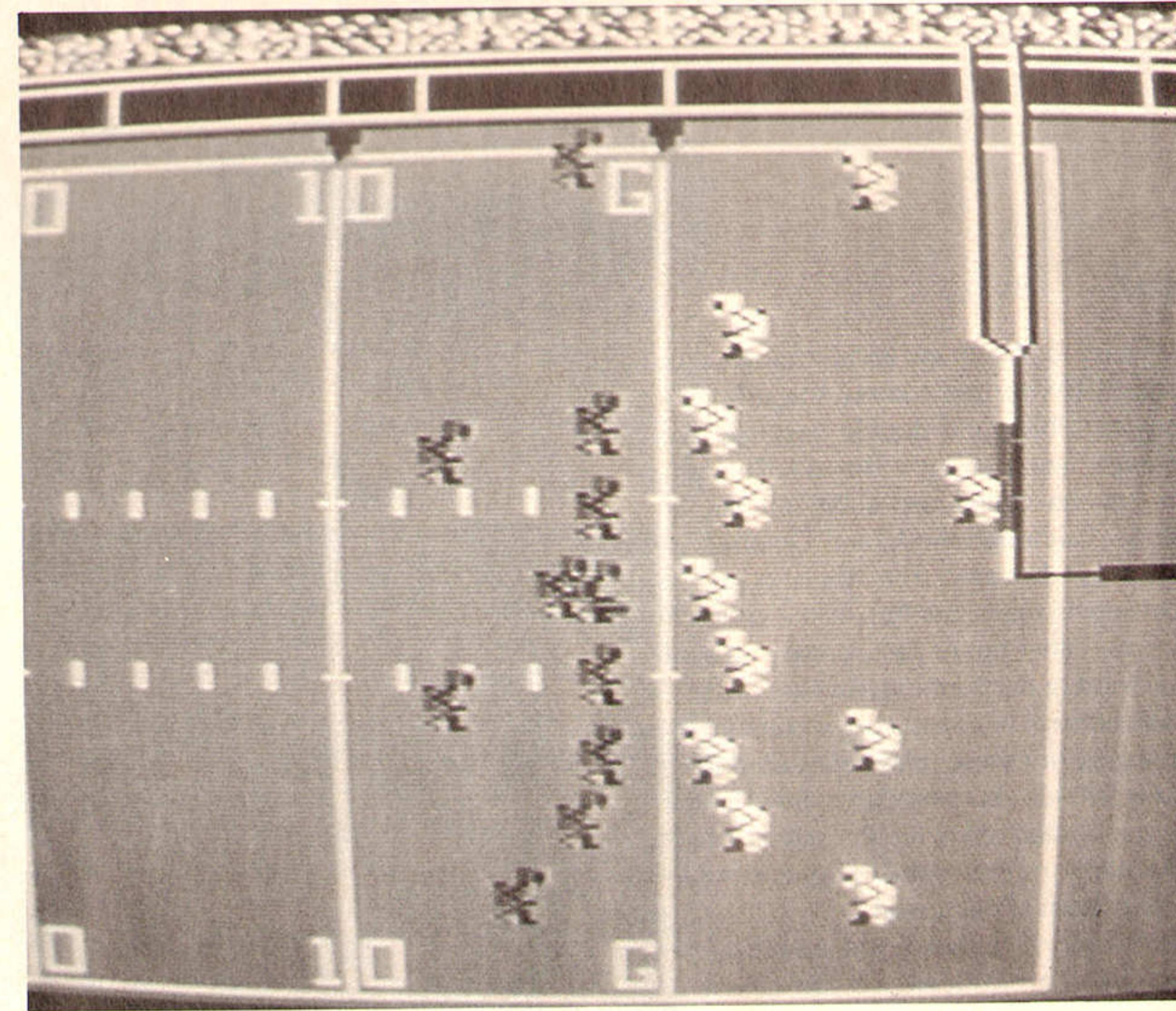
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() Mastercard () Visa

Card Number _____ Exp. date _____

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Have a Super Sunday any Day



By Cheryl Peterson

When I first saw **SUPER SUNDAY**, AVALON HILL was marketing it as **SUPER BOWL SUNDAY**. I enjoyed it tremendously. Obviously others did too because the program was popular enough that Avalon Hill improved the game by allowing players to choose teams from expansion disks. These disks include all the teams playing for each of the years 1984-87. Another companion disk, **GENERAL MANAGER**, allows you to put together your own teams using players found on the other disks.

I think **SUPER SUNDAY** is the ultimate game for Monday morning quarterbacks. You can play one-on-one against a friend or take on the computer. When the computer plays, you decide which of 20 Super Bowl teams you're going up against and which one you want to control. The lineups read

just as they did the day the teams played their Super Bowl games. Some classic teams are on the roster; the 1966 Green Bay Packers with Bart Starr at the helm, the 1982 Washington Redskins, the 1983 Los Angeles Raiders and the 1978 Pittsburgh Steelers to name a few.

Avalon Hill really grabbed my attention with the documentation for this one. All the examples used are taken from the Dolphins-49ers Super Bowl, a personal favorite. Joe Montana and crew blew away the Dolphins and somehow the docs managed to make it sound like it was a shame the Dolphins lost. You can guess where my loyalties lie.

The descriptions of the 10 Super Bowl games whose teams are represented give a nice round look at each contest telling how it actually went. By reading about each, you can get hints as to what players to watch out for and which of your players are particularly strong that day. The documentation also includes play diagrams for each of the offensive and defensive play choices with notes about each.

SUPER BOWL SUNDAY, lets you call the plays. If the computer is playing, it will respond to your game plan and alter its play calls depending on what you do. For instance, if you hand the ball off to a particular back with anything approaching regularity, the computer will set its defense to key on that player. Too many passes may result in the defense blitzing. Of course, you're free to use the same strategies as the computer.

Online help is provided. When choosing plays, each player's statistics for the year are shown. If you want to choose a running play, for instance, the best runners' statistics are displayed — number of attempts, yards gained, average per carry, and number of touchdowns scored. Similar information is shown for all receivers when you choose to go to the air.

The menu driven controls for the game are done well. In two player mode, the offense uses the keyboard and the defense uses the joystick. This makes it fairly easy for both players to keep their plays secret.

It's easy to play if you know enough about football. If you don't know the difference between a blitz and double coverage, you probably won't enjoy it though. The plays that can be called are a bit limited. For instance, although the Miami Dolphins are known for throwing from the shotgun, no provision is made for this in the program. Plays are either run or pass; passes are either long, short or flat; running plays are off tackle (top or bottom) or sweep (top or bottom.) In a real game, of course, plays are called to the right or left side, but since Super Bowl Sunday sets the screen up with the teams placed horizontally, runners actually cut towards the top or bottom of the screen.

Speaking of screens and graphics, the plays are run onscreen, so you can cheer your guys on as they play. You call the play, the teams line up, you hit a key and the play runs. The miniaturized players act out your commands and you watch to see how they fare. Nope, you can't change your mind once the ball is in motion.

There are a few things about the game that weren't as detailed as a true football fan would like. Although you have a choice of which quarterback to use for pass plays, no such provision is made for run plays. When the opposing team puts in their backup quarterback, the program doesn't tell you about it. (This is an important consideration when playing a team like the 1982 Dolphins, who changed quarterbacks so often the local newspapers dubbed the combination of Bob Woodley and Don Strock "Woodstock.")

The program does let you look at the statistics so far in the game, so you can evaluate how well each player is doing. But if you've been paying attention, you'll know anyway.

Being a dedicated Dolphin watcher finally paid off as I stepped into Coach Don Shula's shoes and tried my Dolphins against the 49ers. (I knew the Dolphins should have won that game.)

So here's the big tip folks — the statistics provided indicate each player's yearly totals and appear to have no bearing whatsoever on the outcome of plays and strategy. As close as I can make out, the team members play as well (or as miserably) as they did the day of the Super Bowl they played in. Penalties and injuries are randomly determined by the computer with certain statistical probabilities thrown into the random calculations.

For instance, although the Dolphins have consistently been penalized less than any other team in NFL history, in the 1985 Super Bowl they got more penalties thrown at them than they had all year. When my Dolphins met the 49'ers in the first game I played, I ran the game using the same basic strategy as Coach Shula did. We were heavily penalized!

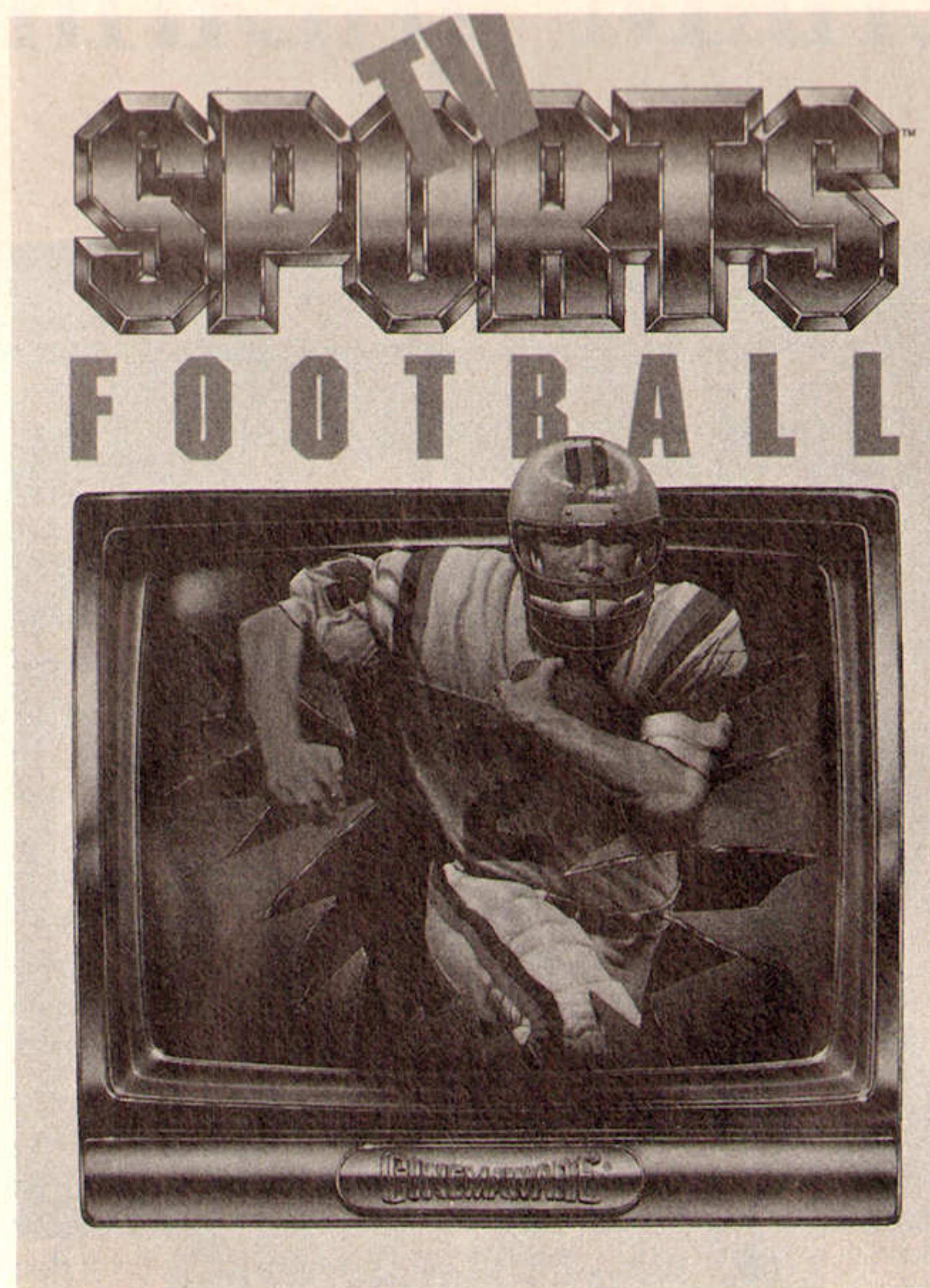
And the players who had a bad day during the 1985 game had a bad day in my computer game. A.J. Duhe missed tackles right and left. Duper and Clayton couldn't hold onto the ball. Two missed field goals and a failed point after. We got creamed! (Just as happened in the real game.)

Circle Reader Service Number 43.

Name: SUPER SUNDAY
Type: Football Simulation
Formats: Commodore 64, IBM, Apple
Publisher: Avalon Hill
Designers: Quest, Inc.
Ages: 10 and up
Players: 1 or 2
Requirements: Commodore 64 and 1541 disk drive
Price: \$30
Each Season Disk (1984, 85, 86 or 87)
 — \$20
General Manager — \$30

Difficulty:	Easy
Packaging:	Very Good (8)
Documentation:	Very Good (8)
Graphics/Text:	Excellent (9)
Realism:	Very Good (7)
Playability:	Excellent (9)
CP RATING:	8.4

A Well-Rounded Game



By Eugene Joseph

With the great number of sports simulation games that are now available on the market, it can be very confusing trying to figure out which program is best for you. Do you want arcade action, statistical simulation, sophisticated graphics or all three? **TV FOOTBALL** from CINEMWARE comes close to offering the best of all possible worlds. This is a brand new release that is now available for the Amiga and will be soon for the IBM. The game has elements that are present in a number of other games but not in quite the same combination. And therein lies the strength of this game. The graphics, even on the IBM, are superb, the arcade

action is responsive and realistic and the statistical record keeping capabilities of the game are very impressive.

First of all, **TV FOOTBALL** is just that. The game opens with graphics and then an announcer that makes you think you're watching an actual broadcast of a game. It's cleverly done, as is almost all of what follows. This "broadcast" is of a game between two of 28 teams from a league that is not the NFL but that has teams in the same cities.

You can pick any team you want, pick a team for the computer or another player, jump right in and start playing and you'll have lots of fun. However, there is a lot more than meets the eye.

Let's take a look at statistics. You can set up a full 16 game season involving all 28 teams (or less if you want, of course) and work through it right to the playoffs and your own

Super Bowl. Let's say you have seven other friends who are interested in playing too. You can each take a team (or two for that matter) and assign the rest of the teams to the computer. So now, some of the teams will involve player against player, others player against computer, and others the computer against itself.

After setting up your schedule, you have all the players play in their games and then let the computer play all its games against itself. You've now completed Week 1 of your season and the computer will record all of the statistics from the games, including, of course, the won-loss records and carry all of this information, updating it after every game till the end of your season. As you can see, from a record-keeping standpoint it's an impressive program.

Now as far as individual player capabilities, the teams can be tailored, ability-wise to match your favorite pro teams or you can determine the strengths of the team yourself. You can have a great running back but your passer will be weaker. Or you can make the two equal for a balanced attack. The same goes for defense. Because of this approach, you can't have a really awful team or a truly great team. Every team has the same number of talent points. It's up to you to determine how to use them. Which means that the game will be decided by superior play-calling and running, kicking, passing and tackling ability.

That's the way it should be, and that brings us to the arcade action. It's good. Really good. It's as much fun to run as it is to pass with this game because you can control the running back as soon as the quarterback hands him the ball. Try to juke your way past the defensive players if you're good with a joystick. And if you're on defense, you can control any one of four players which you must decide before the snap of the ball.

Passing is a lot of fun too, although my only two criticisms of the game come in regard to passing. Number one is that you can't pass to the tight end: he always blocks. It's not a big problem because you have three other receivers on any given play, but I just like to dump one over the middle to a big tight end once in a while.

Number two is that when you drop back to pass, your view of the field is limited to only about 15 yards downfield so that your receivers soon run out of your view. You have to know what routes your receivers are taking if you want to throw a pass any longer than your vision allows. It's tough at first but you get used to it. You're also helped by the fact that the receivers will run to the ball once it's in the air the same way real receivers will. You can also take control of one of the receivers with your joystick as soon as the quarterback has released the ball and try to catch the ball. Either way it works pretty well. After all, passing is tricky, even in real life as anyone who has ever been a quarterback will tell you (believe me). So this part of the game is actually very realistic.

The game isn't all offense either. Defense is

fun to play too. You can blitz the defensive player you control, as a linebacker, or have him play back to defend against a pass, or even have him play tough against the run in a short-yardage situation.

There are a number of offensive and defensive plays to call, not an overwhelming number, but each play can be changed because of your control over the players. The offensive plays can be run to either side of the field so you really have twice as many plays as it seems and the quarterback can audible or improvise on every play.

And now, just a few quick words about the graphics. They're great. How's that for quick? The colors are bright, the detail is sharp, and hey, the officials even drop little yellow flags for penalties and the players can dive to try and make tackles and catches. What else could you want? A touchdown dance? It's got that too.

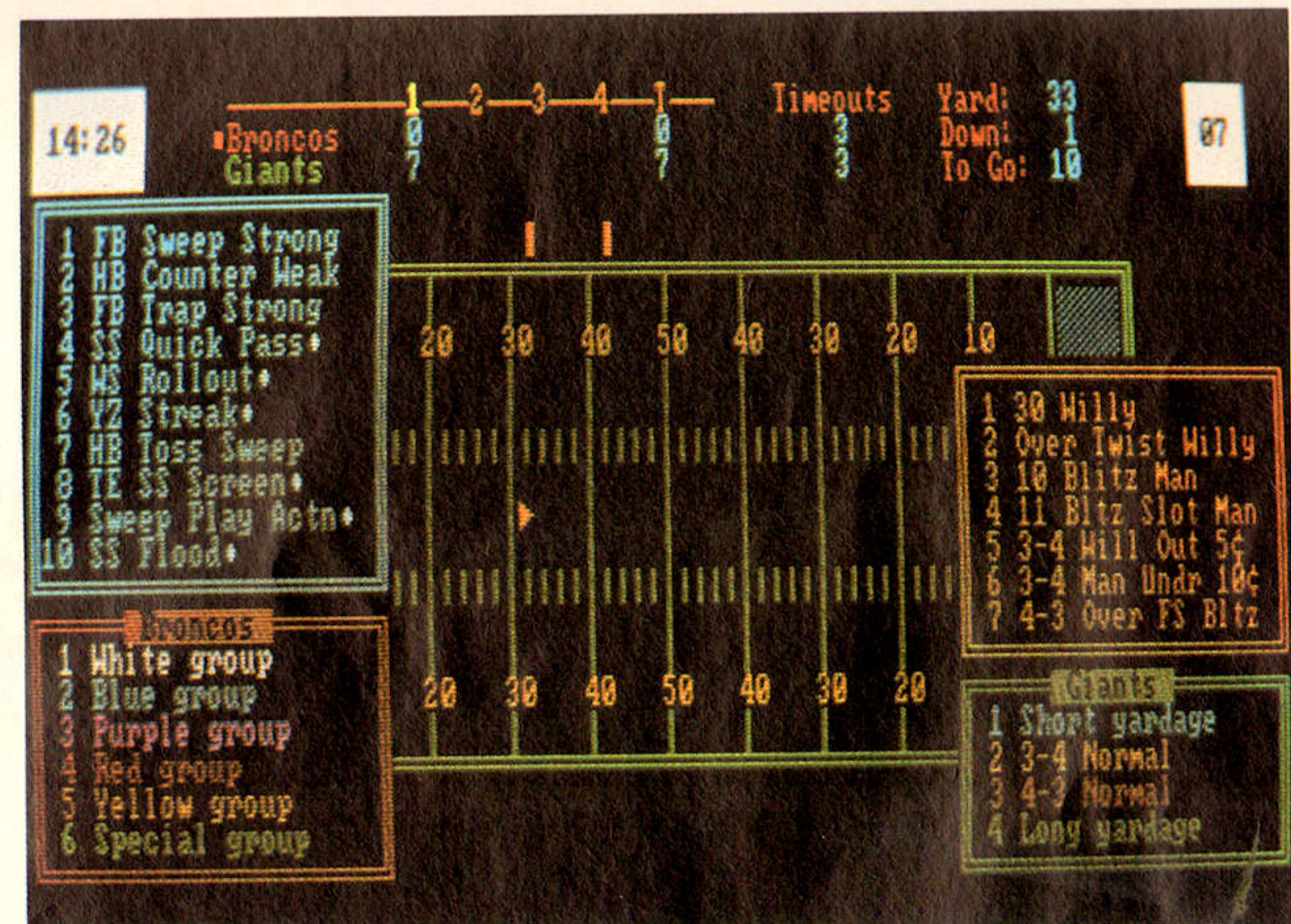
I don't know if this is the best football game available or not. I hate to make a statement like that without having played every game on the market. But I'd have to say this: if you can find a better game than this, buy it. Because it would have to be a tremendous game. As it is, **TV FOOTBALL** is a game that others will be measured against for some time to come. It will provide you and your friends with many hours of enjoyment and is a great value. So . . . see you in the Super Bowl.

Name: **TV FOOTBALL**
Type: Simulation/Arcade
Formats: Amiga, IBM soon
Publisher: Cinemaware
Designers: Larry Garner, John Cutter
Ages: 12 and up
Players: one or two
Requirements: 512K, joystick
Price: \$49.95

Ability Level: Intermediate
Packaging: Good (7)
Documentation: Good (7)
Graphics/Text: Very Good (9)
Playability: Excellent (9.8)
CP RATING: 8.9

Circle Reader Service Number 44.

The Thinking Man's Game



By Eugene Joseph

Pro football has often been called the "thinking man's" game, in spite of all the violence, because of its endless possibilities for strategizing. It's fitting then that the only games officially licensed by the NFL are games that place their emphasis on strategy and play-calling.

PRO CHALLENGE and **NFL CHALLENGE**, both from XOR, are two versions of strategy-oriented football simulations that are devoid of arcade-type action and graphics (i.e., little men running around on the screen). They rely instead on strategy and statistical probability. Both of the games are covered in this one review because of their similarity — **NFL CHALLENGE** is actually an upgraded version of **PRO CHALLENGE**. And in fact, if

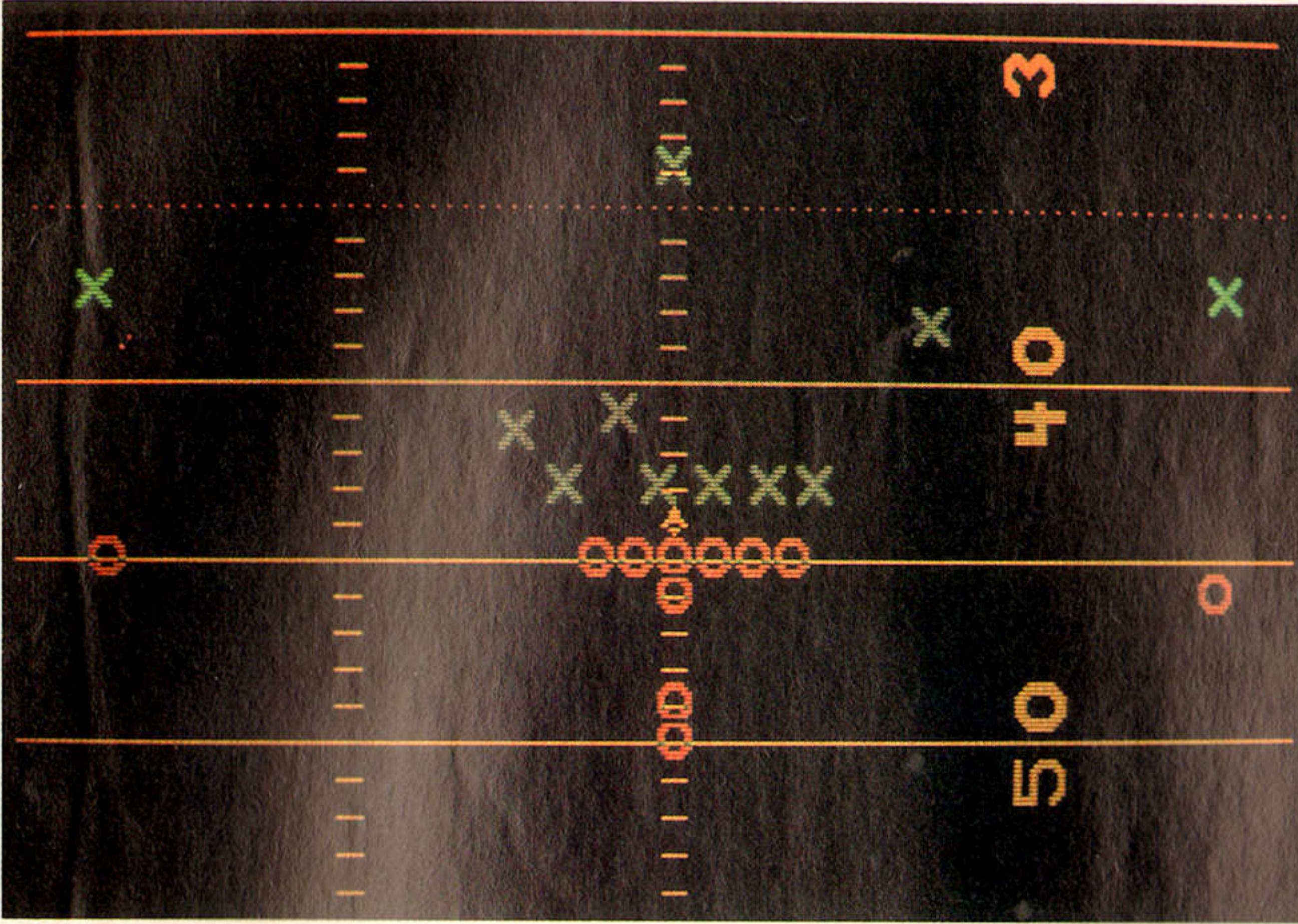
you own PRO and want NFL, just send in your game and \$50.00 to XOR and they'll send it to you no matter how old and tattered your PRO game is.

It's probably something that you'd want to do too, after playing PRO for a while (assuming you have the \$50 to spare) because the most important feature of a sports game that bases its appeal on realistic simulation is the ability to recreate the effect of having the real teams playing each other.

The teams in the games should have the same strengths and weaknesses as the actual teams that are being simulated. The Chicago Bears in your simulation should have a rock-ribbed defense along with a strong running game and the Miami Dolphins should be able to pass the ball up and down the field.

Unfortunately, **PRO CHALLENGE** doesn't offer that capability. Instead, there are only two teams to pick from: the All-Stars and the All-Pros. They are faceless and identical in terms of talent so the only real challenge comes from trying to outwit your opponent, human or computer, in the selection of offensive and defensive plays.

There are 23 offensive plays that can be run from three different formations and 14 defensive plays that can be run from two different defenses. It's not a tremendous number of plays to choose from but there is a good variety. After each player chooses a play, the computer takes over and displays the play being run out on a gridiron with x's and o's representing the players.



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It's not a terribly exciting game visually and you also miss out on the realistic aspect of simulating two pro teams. It is fun to call plays against either a defensive or offensive opponent to see how your play-calling abilities

stack up. To really get the full effect, however, you have to step up to **NFL CHALLENGE**.

This game provides you with the opportunity to coach any one of the 28 NFL teams with statistics based on the players' actual performances for a given year. The original

game's statistics were based on the '84 season, and every succeeding year, the disks were updated to reflect the next year's statistics. There are now a number of other disks available as well. You can get the teams from the last four seasons, a special Super Bowl Team disk, or an All-Star Team disk with greatest teams from past years. Prices for these disks range from \$14 to \$24.

This flexibility gives the true fan a chance to play some interesting games: the '67 Packers against the '72 undefeated Dolphins, for instance. The possibilities are almost endless. You have to be content with watching x's and o's but this game gives you more than twice as many plays to choose from as does PRO, and you also have the unique personality of each team.

It's fun to see if your play calling can overcome the disadvantages of playing a much stronger opponent. It can be done, but not often and not easily. Kind of like the NFL.

Statistics are kept for each game and can be displayed at any time during the game. You can also print them out to have a record of the game. As coach, you can control substitutions and there is a special disk available that allows you to edit your roster and change the capabilities of the players.

Name: PRO CHALLENGE

Type: Simulation
Publisher: XOR
Designers: Many
Ages: 12 and up
Players: one or two
Requirements: none
Price: \$49.95

Ability Level: Beginner - Intermediate

Packaging: Good (7.5)
Documentation: Good (7)
Graphics/Text: Average (6)
Realism: Average (6)
Playability: Average (6)

CP RATING: 6.24

Circle Reader Service Number 45.

There are many realistic aspects to the game, the foremost being the accuracy of the teams. The basic problem with the game is cost. To get all of the abovementioned software and give yourself the true flexibility available will run you around \$150. That's a lot, and is worth it only if you really want the official numbers to represent each team. There are many other alternatives available on the market for less money, but not having reviewed every one of them, it's hard to say how some of them stack up against NFL. This game delivers what it promises. It's just a question of balancing the price vs the performance.

Name: NFL CHALLENGE

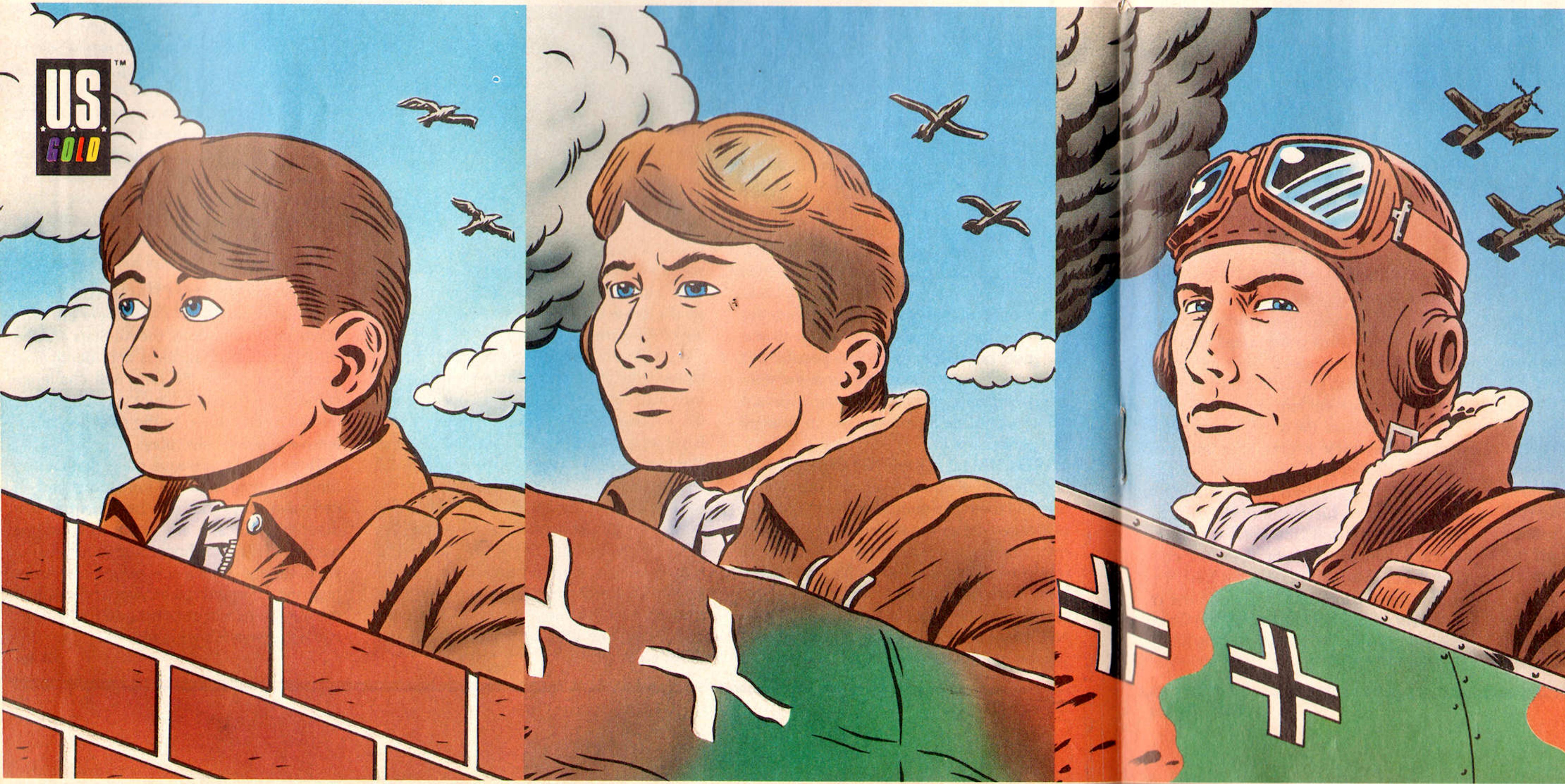
Type: Simulation
Publisher: XOR
Designers: Many
Ages: 12 and up
Players: one or two
Requirements: None
Price: \$99.95

Ability Level: Beginner-Intermediate

Packaging: Very Good (8)
Documentation: Very Good (8)
Graphics/Text: Average (6)
Realism: Average (6)
Playability: Average (6)

CP RATING: 6.4

Circle Reader Service Number 46.



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Landings	Brace yourself	Limited

Note: Comparisons are based on current Apple, IBM, and Commodore 64/128 versions of the product.
Apple II Series & Compatibles, Atari ST, Commodore 64/128, IBM PC & Compatibles. Screens from Atari ST version of the game.
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Go for it in the GFL



By Mark DeCarlo

"Becoming a winner in **GFL FOOTBALL** can be summed up in three words: Practice, practice, practice!", a quote from the GFL Player's Guide.

No kidding! Beware, this game is not for the faint-hearted or weak-willed. You've got to want to win, win, win!!! And keep the kids away, this is a game for people who have played the real thing. **GFL FOOTBALL** starts out miles ahead of the pack simply by the perspective used in the game. You control the players from down on the field, in fact you ARE the players. While the plays are being run, you watch the game unfold from the inside of a helmet as you're blasting through the line or running your pass pat-

tern. But enough breathless enthusiasm, let's start at the beginning.

There are two modes to this crushing contest: one player vs. the computer, and two-player competition. In each mode, you begin the game by selecting the length of the quarters, either 4 or 7 minutes.

Now it's time to become an owner. The draft allows players to select one team out of the 28 available they'd like to use. Each team is rated on strengths and weaknesses and is ranked in divisional standings. Just like real football, **GFL FOOTBALL** is heavy on stats.

The whistle blows, the teams are on the field: KICKOFF! The ball flies through the air and it's caught. Now it's time for you to get into the action. From inside your helmet, you see the whole field in front of you. Charging defensemen, cheering fans and the approaching

goalposts are all visible as you cut and run your way past angry looking guys who want to hurt you. If you time it right, you can stiff-arm an attacker and keep going. Used with your occasional bursts of speed, your moves just might be enough to get you into the end zone. If not, it's time for real football.

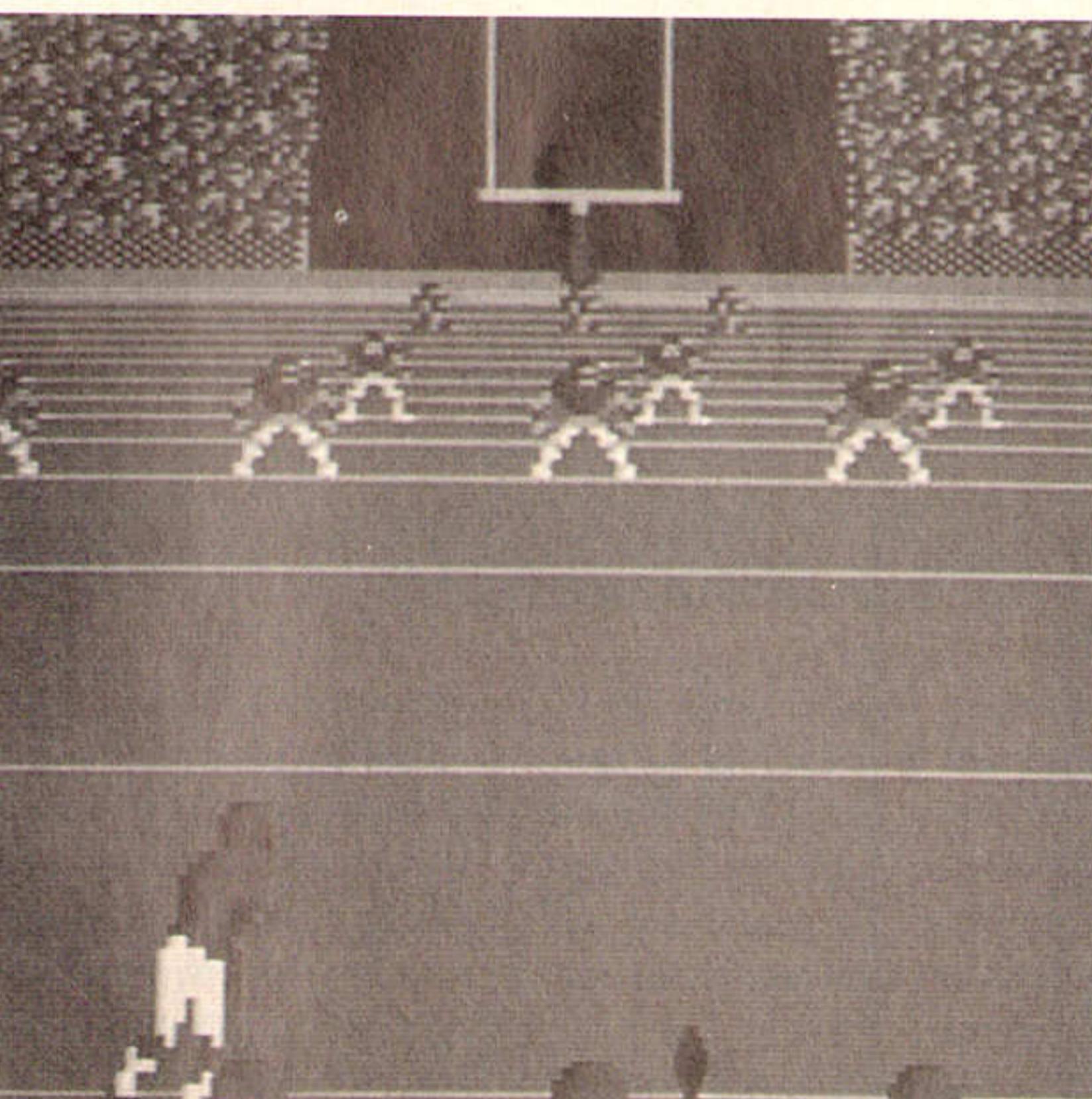
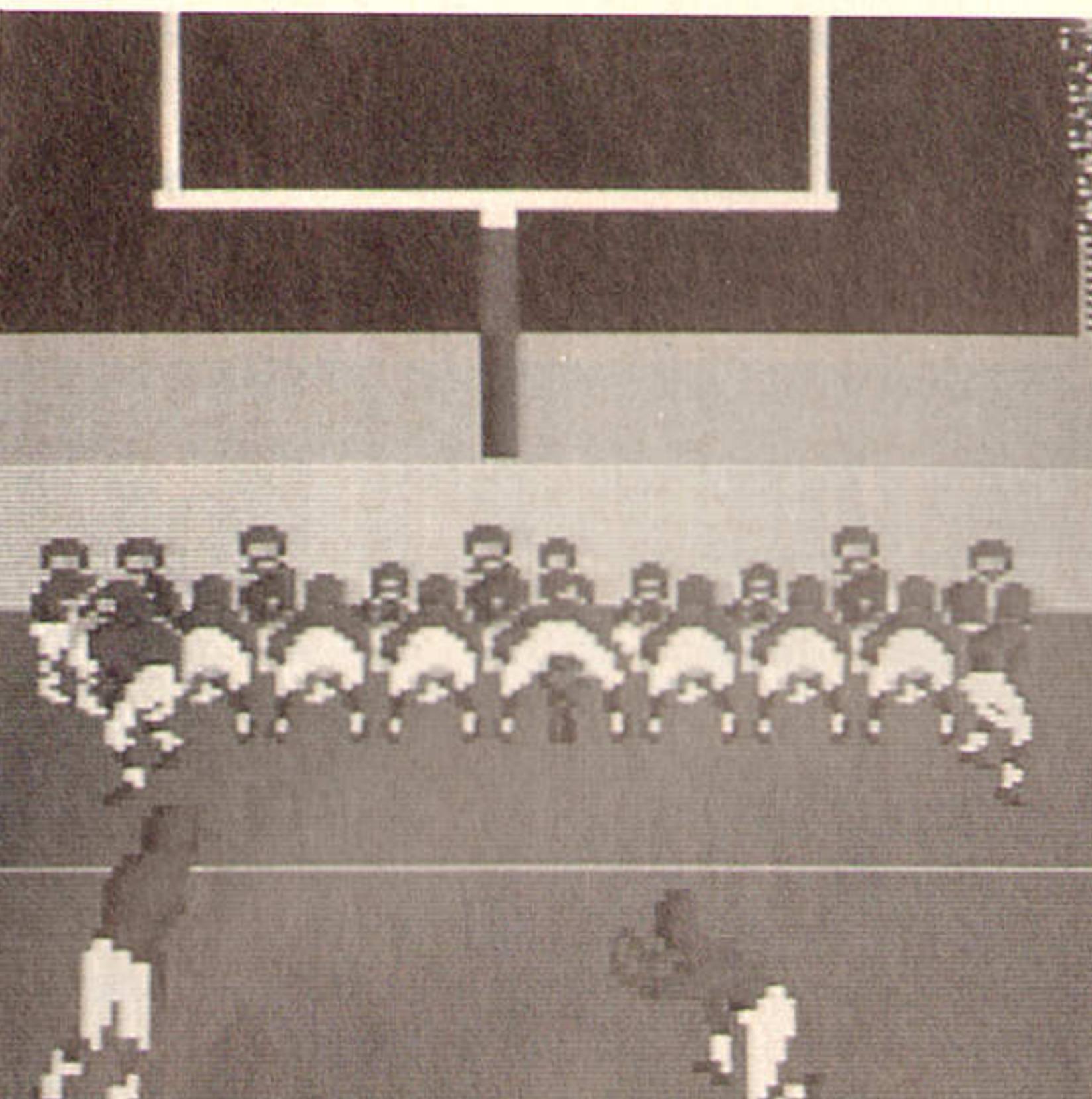
Prior to each play, the offensive and defensive coaches pick a play. The offensive coach can select any variety of run or pass play using the positions of his players to guide you into a successful drive. After the offense has selected, the defensive coach selects a defense. Once he does, the computer takes over and plays it for him. This means that a good coach can stop the offense, but a bad coach who calls the wrong play will rapidly find himself trailing on the big board.

Any pass pattern that is run in real football is available in **GFL FOOTBALL**. Posts, flags, turn-outs, turn-ins — all of these require split second timing and exact routing to be successful. As the receiver, you've got to make sure that you're where you should be when the QB uncorks his pass. If you're not, anything from an incomplete to a turnover can result.

On a running play, you're the tailback. In front of you, you can see your linemen as well as the defensive line glaring back over the line of scrimmage. On "hike", you get the ball and have to move towards the hole

you've called. If you time it right, you can make it through, if not you'll be crushed. It's so simple, just like real football.

That's basically it. Most of the rules reflect real-life football play. The skills of successful passing and running, however, are not easy to master. This game will take you time to learn. Unlike some other more simplistic games, **GFL FOOTBALL** is for the hard-core gridiron freak. It combines stats compiled from real NFL games with fast-paced joystick action to deliver a truly realistic feeling for the game. You can't get more real than inside a helmet.



To play **GFL FOOTBALL** in the most realistic manner possible, you need an IBM-pc or 100% compatible computer with at least 256 RAM, a color monitor, a color graphics card, and two joysticks. This same package will also run on the Tandy 1000, Apple IIe and IIc, and the Commodore 64 and 128.

The two player competition mode is really thrilling and because this game is so well designed and produced, **GFL FOOTBALL** actually becomes a sport of its own. You don't sweat and grunt and bleed, but the level of competition is limited only by the skill of the players. The more experienced they are, the more fantastic this game becomes. So strap on your helmet, put that black stuff under your eyes and get moving: this is GAME DAY!

Circle Reader Service Number 47.

Name: **GFL FOOTBALL**

Type: Strategy

Formats: Apple IIe, C^{64/128}, IBM

Publisher: Gamestar/Activision

Designers: Mark Madland,

Scott Orr, Dennis Kirsch

Ages: 12 and up

Players: one or two

Requirements: None

Price: \$42.95

Ability Level:

Inter.-Advanced

Packaging:

Good (7)

Documentation:

Very Good (8)

Graphics/Text:

Very Good (9)

Realism:

Very Good (9)

Playability:

Very Good (9)

CP RATING:

8.72

Two on Two in the GBA

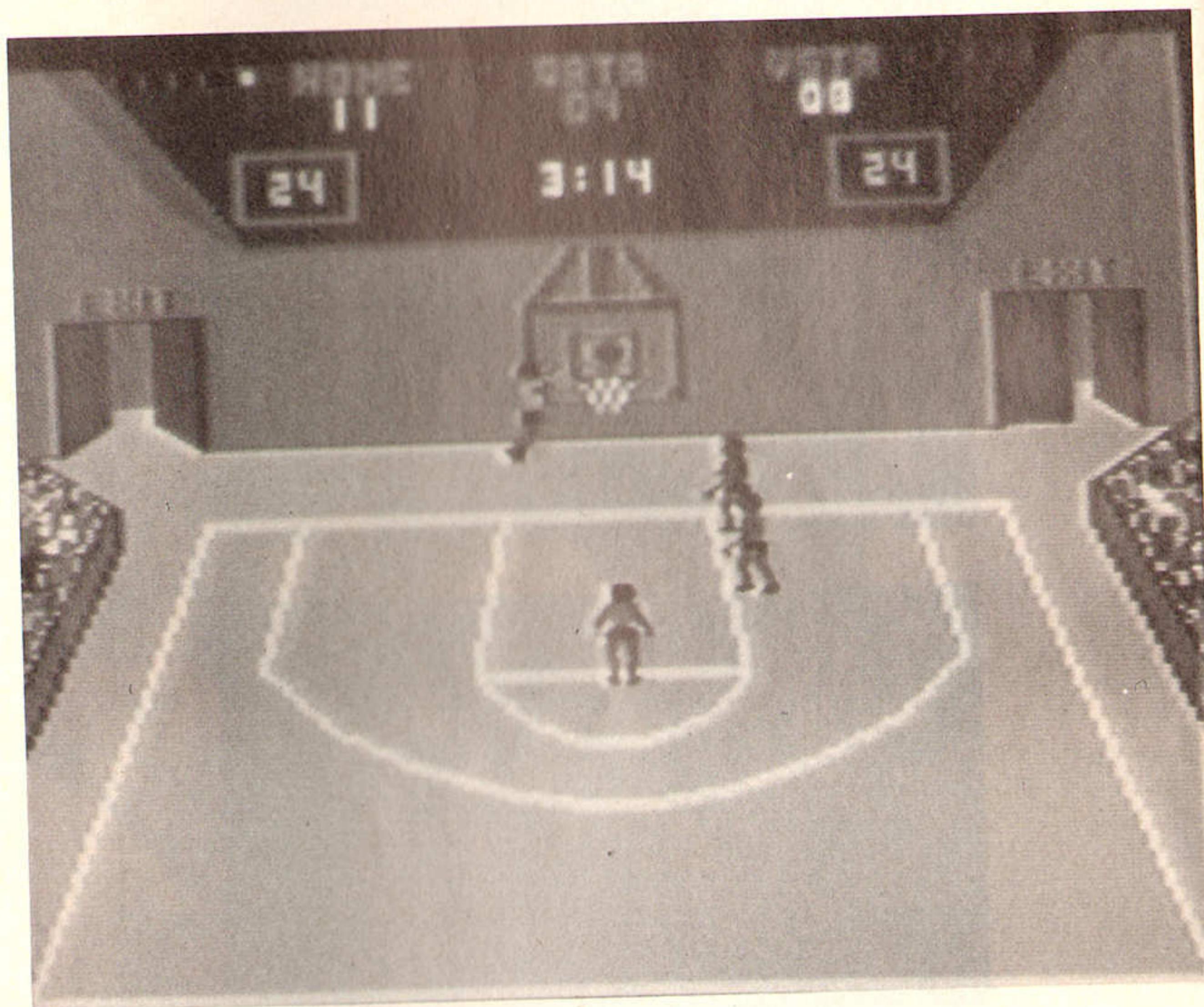
By Mark DeCarlo

If you know basketball, or think you do, this game is for you. With **GBA BASKETBALL**, you can play any way you want; one player vs. the computer, two players vs. a computer team, two players against each other — even a 23 team tournament, culminating with the GBA Finals. But let's start slowly and warm up so nobody gets hurt.

First of all, let's get the hardware specs out of the way. To play **GBA BASKETBALL** the way it should be experienced, you need an IBM-pc or 100% compatible computer with at least 256 RAM, a color monitor, a color graphics card, and two joysticks. You can play without the sticks, but it's easier if you don't have to use the keyboard controls. This same package will also run on the Tandy 1000, Apple IIe and IIc, and the Commodore 64 and 128.

Just like in real basketball, there is a practice session before the game. In this mode, you and your opponent practice your shots independently of each other and hone your shooting skills. The control over each player is quite exact. Each time you make a move to the basket, you must choose either a hook, slam or jump shot. You can also make a tip-in on offense, or come down with a big rebound on defense. The type of shot is determined by where your player is on the court, which direction he's facing and how good he is.

Yes, that's right. Unlike many other games on the market, it actually matters who is doing the shooting. In addition to your regular players, (you and your friend), GBA has a player draft. Some of the names in this draft may even



sound familiar; Kareem Ugrin, Larry Berg, Magic Lyndon to name a few. Each of the ten star players are rated in six categories of performance; Inside/Outside, Dribbling/Stealing and Quickness/Jumping. For each set of paired skills, a star player's total rating can not exceed 10. For example, Kareem Ugrin is rated 4-Inside/6-Outside, 5-Dribbling/5-Stealing, and 4-Quickness/6-Jumping. Your regular player's ratings can not exceed 8, after all not everyone can be a star.

This may sound overly technical, but once the basics of the game are mastered there is a lot of room for actual "playing". The control of the joysticks is exact and can move your players all over the court quickly and easily. Ballhandling and shooting are the main skills for this game, but the thing that will make you a winner in the long run is teamwork.

GBA BASKETBALL is unique in that you must play team ball to win. Just like in real basketball, the keys to the game are concise passing, accurate shooting and ag-

gressive defense.

During practice mode players can simply shoot, play HORSE, or a game of Around the World. It's like being on a schoolyard court. After you're hot, it's time to move on to the scouting report. Now you can rate yourself on the six categories and rate your teammate. A balanced attack is the best approach. Some guys shoot better inside than others. Other players are good ball stealers and good jumpers. Remember that it takes all kinds to make a good team.

After you and your opponent have set your ratings, a playing mode is selected. In Two Player Head to Head, each human player is matched with a computer court-mate for a bristling game of two-on-two hoop. There are also other options, as mentioned above including the 23-Game tournament. In this mode, your team must play and beat all 23 teams from the four divisions to be crowned GBA CHAMPS! It isn't easy, but then world domination never is.

The Players Guide contains a chart that will help you to select which of the ten star players you want for your team. Each player has his own strengths and weaknesses, so it's important to get a guy who will compliment your own style of play and produce a winner.

Passing is the key to any basketball game, and GBA is no exception. Using the joystick, or keyboard, you and your computer teammate can execute difficult plays easily. Hit a man on the run, send him under the basket, fake and shoot yourself. All of these options are controlled from the joystick. For the money, the wildest shot is the slam-dunk. If you've got an inside shooter, rated 4,5 or 6 and you can get him all alone under the hoop, he'll make the dunk. As an added bonus, he'll do in a slo-mo closeup that you'll swear has been lifted from CBS Sports.

The graphics with this game are incredible. Because of the importance of each man's moves, they have to be very detailed in how they appear on screen. The programmers have done such a good job that you can

detect even the cock of a wrist during shooting. The arms and legs of the players are animated in true-to-life form, all of which adds a dimension of realism to this game that few other programs can offer.

After each basket the offense and defense must select their next plays. Defense can play man to man or zone while the offense selects from six different locations on the court to focus on; left wing, right wing, top of key, basket, or screen. This command corresponds to the target destination of your play, and where you'll most likely take your shot. It's not easy though, as the defense sticks to you like glue.

The two-player head to head mode is the most exciting and satisfying game to play. It features both computer-assisted play and direct competition with a friend.

Both in design and execution, **GBA BASKETBALL** is an excellent game for your home computer that features life-like action, great graphics and thrilling competition. A faithful computer version of the real thing.

Name: **GBA BASKETBALL**

Type: Simulation

Formats: Apple IIe, C⁶⁴/128, IBM

Publisher: Gamestar/Activision

Designers: Troy Lyndon,

Scott Orr, John Cutter

Ages: 12 and up

Players: one or two

Requirements: None

Price: \$14.95

Ability Level:

Intermediate

Packaging:

Good(7)

Documentation:

Very Good (8)

Realism:

Very Good (9)

Graphics/Text:

Very Good (8)

Playability:

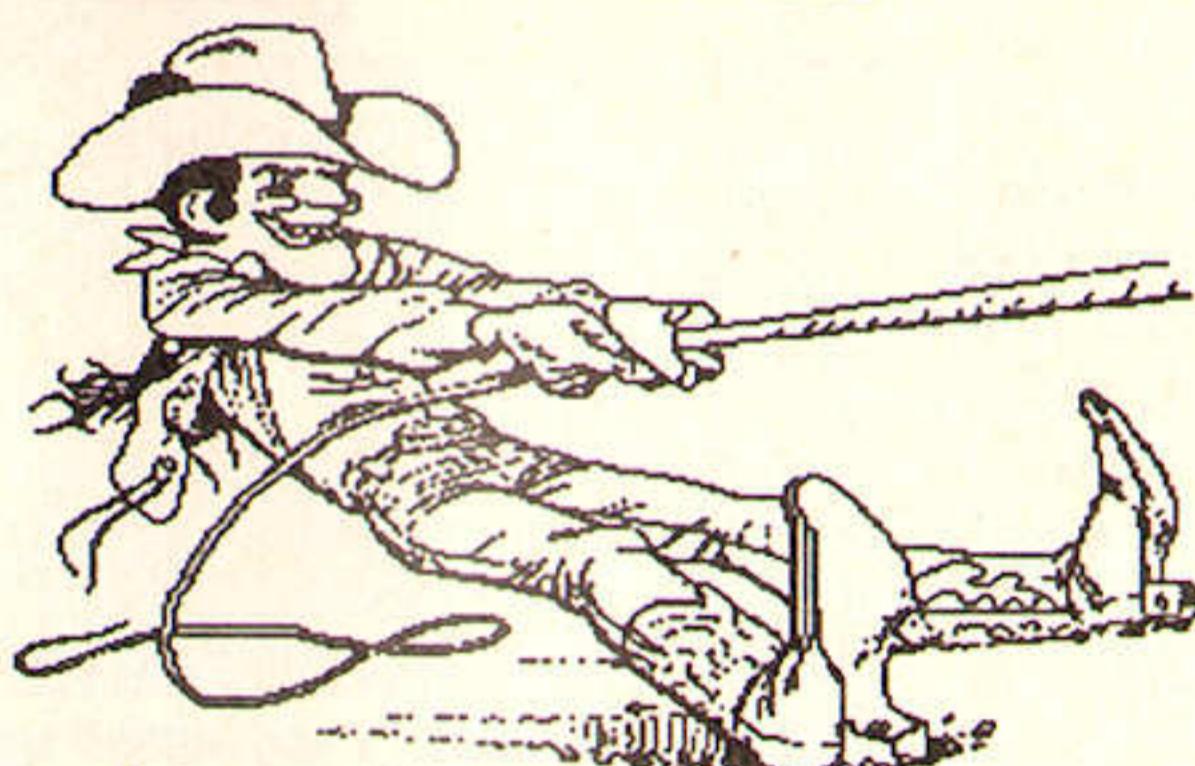
Very Good (9)

CP RATING:

8.52

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No. This ad is not a loan program and it's not a scheme. It's a fast and efficient way for you to make \$2,000 or more the first week and far more in the weeks ahead.

Sound to unbelievable to be true? It's really not. We know you're probably tempted to rip this page up or turn to another section, but please bear with us.

You have a right to be skeptical. We've seen all too many schemes that have promised you instant income in the past when in reality they didn't do a thing for you. We guarantee you this isn't one of those.

Right away I can guarantee you this is not in any way part of a government program. There's no gimmick involved and you don't have to live in any particular part of the country to qualify.

And you don't need experience or a fancy education to become rich. In fact one of the most successful people we know using the program was a 60 year old woman with a ninth grade education who spent her life being a mother and housewife. In a period of eight years she made more than \$1 million dollars. And believe us when we tell you she didn't inherit anything and every penny was made possible through the program.

Her husband had become deathly ill, incapable of working or earning any money. He had virtually no insurance, and no income. What he did have was a mountain of unpaid bills, a huge mortgage payment, car payments, and a flock of loans to pay back from a small business that failed.

For awhile it looked like her only option was to sell the house and car and declare bankruptcy. Fortunately, she didn't have to do any of that. Instead, she took a deep breath and decided that it was time to become financially independent.

The fact is she made it, and so can you. We've shown thousands of others how to become financially independent. We've put together a package of valuable information, detailing principles that can and will make you money - big money. You'll learn that it's not how much time you put into something, but how you use the time. Most millionaires work far less than the average person, yet they get a lot more out of the time they put into it.

One thing we want to emphasize - this will not be material put together by a bunch of amateurs or worse yet 'book worms' who know what should work, but have never done it. Instead it's put together by a staff that has started with nothing and have ended up as millionaires.

They'll be giving you the type of tips and insight into things that only experience can give. They'll tell you step-by-step how they regularly made hundreds of thousands of dollars.

I imagine by now you're worried that a program like this will cost you a small fortune. And it would at most places. You could end up paying thousands getting the same type of advice at private consultations with financial experts or hundreds going to seminars.

Quite frankly, our team of experts could make far more money doing business in that way but they've reached the point where money is no longer a goal. We've tried it that way and it turned out that we

were only helping the rich get richer, so now we're trying this technique of spreading our knowledge to the average person at a price they can afford - a mere \$10. We guarantee that you'll think it's worth every penny.

In fact, we're so sure of it that we're willing to guarantee you'll be pleased or we'll give you your money back if you let us know within 30 days - no questions asked.

That gives you almost a month to leisurely sit back and look over the material. We're confident you'll find it the most valuable information you've ever seen.

If you feel it can't help you, send the material back and we'll return your check or money order uncashed.

Still skeptical? We can't say we blame you. There are enough rip-off artists out to cheat you. That's why we invite you to postdate your check a month from when you send it to safeguard yourself.

One thing that I'm sure is bothering you is that the only people you're hearing from about the program is us. That's why we've decided it's important to share with you some of the letters we've received from satisfied customers. All the following people are real but we've given you just the initials to protect the privacy of the individuals involved.

'I got the \$6000 I needed to send my daughter to college.'

'One of my biggest goals in life has always been to be able to finance my son and daughter's education. I had enough money saved up to send my son, but when my daughter's turn came up I couldn't come up with the money. I was in enough debt that no one would give me a loan and things looked hopeless until I came across your ad. Like most people, I figured as long as you guaranteed satisfaction, I had nothing to lose. Instead, I gained plenty.'

The only thing we would say is that you should act quickly. To be honest, nothing lasts forever and there's no telling how much longer we'll be able to offer the program at such a low price.

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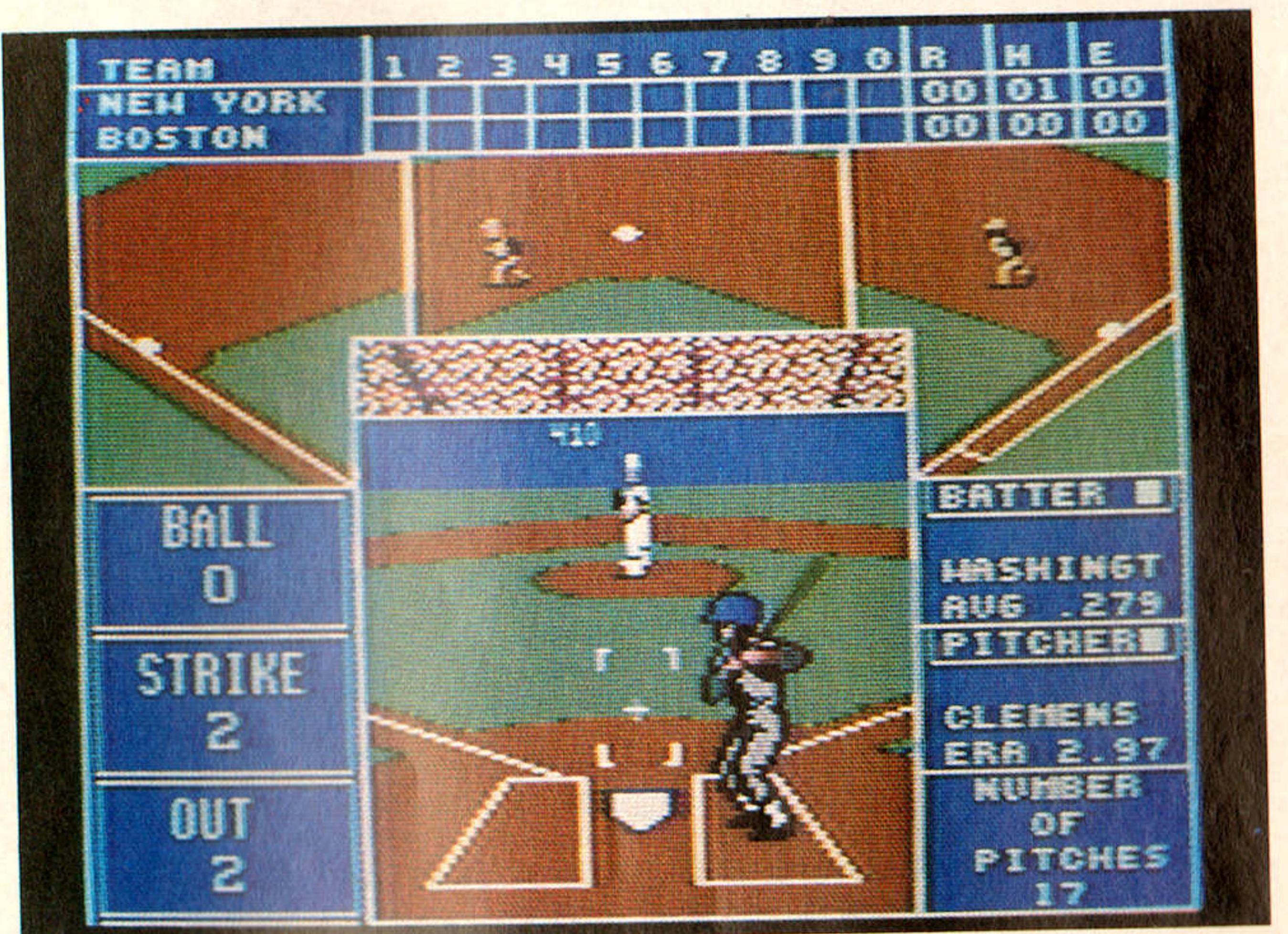
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You can see the batter's view of the pitcher and infield in one window, while three separate windows show the three bases and any baserunners who may be taking their lead-offs. If the ball is hit, the views will change to give you the chance to make your play.

I was surprised but pleased to see that in games where the computer is playing it makes use of the pick-off attempt to "keep the runners honest." And the computer does make use of pinchhitters and relief pitchers when they are called for.

The game is easy to play and for those with good joystick reflexes the game will be lots of fun. Others, like me, who prefer to just let the computer handle the batwork, pitching and fielding will also enjoy the program. In spectator mode, it's much like watching a game on the "boob tube." About the only thing missing is the play-by-play commentator reminding you of how many stolen bases the man on first has managed to rack up this year.

Well, that and the fact the computer-controlled players never make any errors. When playing against the computer in joystick mode, you should know that the fielders playing against you are perfect; they never miss a cut-off and never lose the ball in the sun. Your fielding will have to be perfect if you want to beat the computer and fielding is probably the hardest part of the game.

like he is only one step away from the bag, the first baseman always throws it over to the pitcher standing on first.

The one place where the sound excels is in the opening shot. The Caribbean-tinged version of "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" is very entertaining. I do wish the rest of the sound effects had been done as well. After each pitch a high or low pitched bleep lets you know whether it was a strike or ball. When a run crosses the plate the program plays the "ta ta ta ta ta da" sequence that is usually played just before the fans scream "Charge" at real games. This seems a bit backward to me. The sound used when a batter strikes out is very much reminiscent of a "Bronx cheer" or "raspberry."

SPORTING NEWS BASEBALL is fun and I had no trouble spending long hours watching some customized teams beat up on each other. Not being a joystick whiz, I got whipped unmercifully when I tried to actually try my hand against the computers team. Even so with time, performance improves. I think hard-core baseball fans will enjoy playing or coaching their own professional baseball team. While I can see some improvements that could be made, the game is still fun and I enjoyed playing it.

Circle Reader Service Number 49.

**Name: THE SPORTING NEWS
BASEBALL**

Type: Simulation
Formats: Commodore
Publisher: Epyx, Inc.
Designers: not available
Ages: 10 and up
players: 1-2
Requirements: joystick
Price: \$39.95

Ability Level:

Beginner in
manager mode,
intermediate in joystick mode.

Good (7)

Packaging:

Very Good (8)

Documentation:

Average (6)

Graphics/Text:

Average (6)

Realism:

Very good (7)

Playability:

7.35

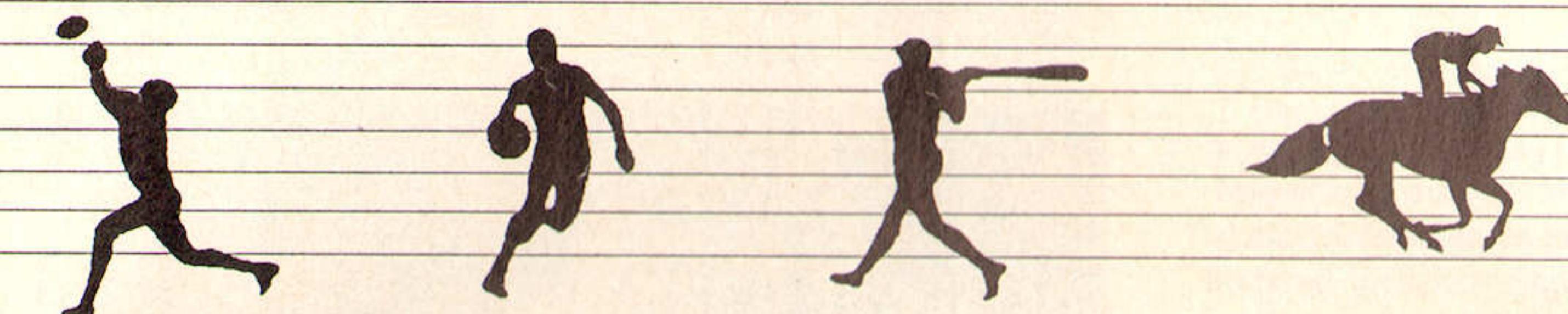
CP RATING:

Very good (7)

7.35

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Charlie Hustle's New Game

By Rawson Stovall

Computer baseball games — there are so many of them, and yet they are all different. There are action baseball games: hit, catch, run, throw, slide, steal; statistical baseball games: real names, real stats, little action; there are strategical baseball games: decisions, decisions, decisions, and then there is Gamestar's **PETE ROSE PENNANT FEVER**.

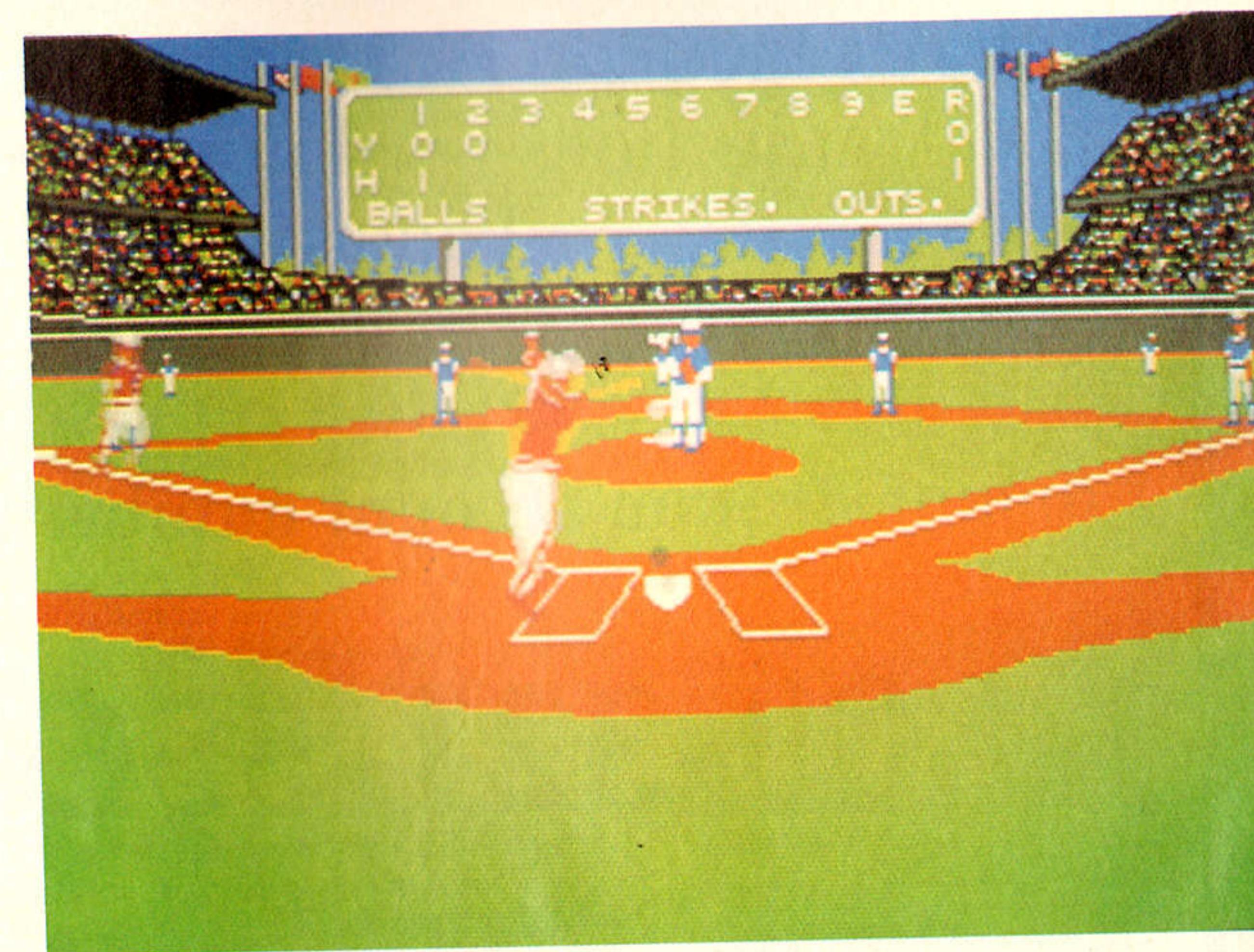
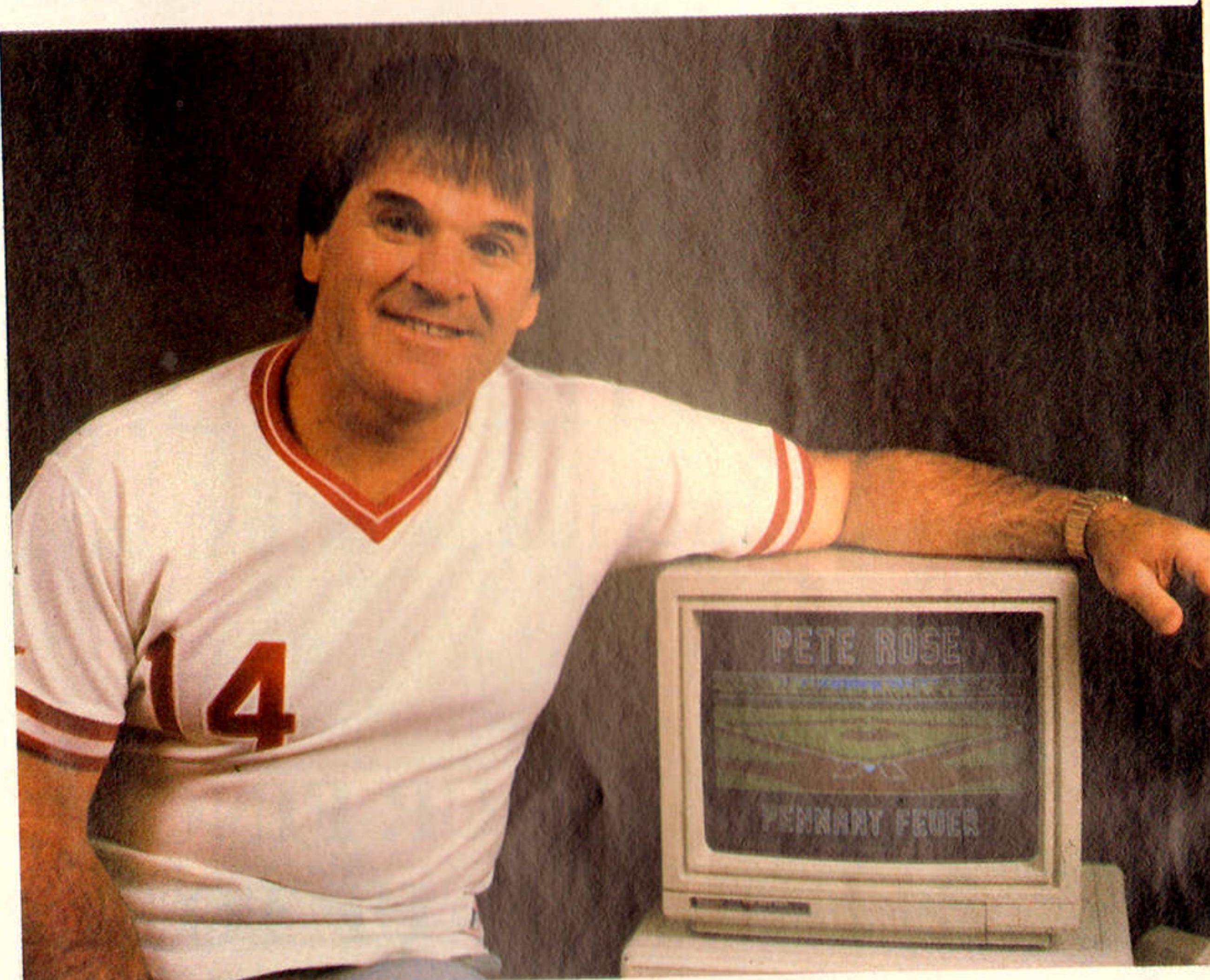
Gamestar calls **PENNANT FEVER** "action-oriented", but I find the game to be a combination of both action and strategy type baseball games. Stated Rose, "I want this game to put you right on the field rather than in the dugout because the real difference between winning and losing is not what in you know, but in what you do. Statistics don't mean a thing when you're standing at the plate facing a 90-mile-an-hour fastball."

For the strategy part **PENNANT FEVER** adds a General Manager's view of the game. In the front office, the player put in charge of an expansion team. The object of the game is for the player to build this infant team into a pennant winner in just ten seasons.

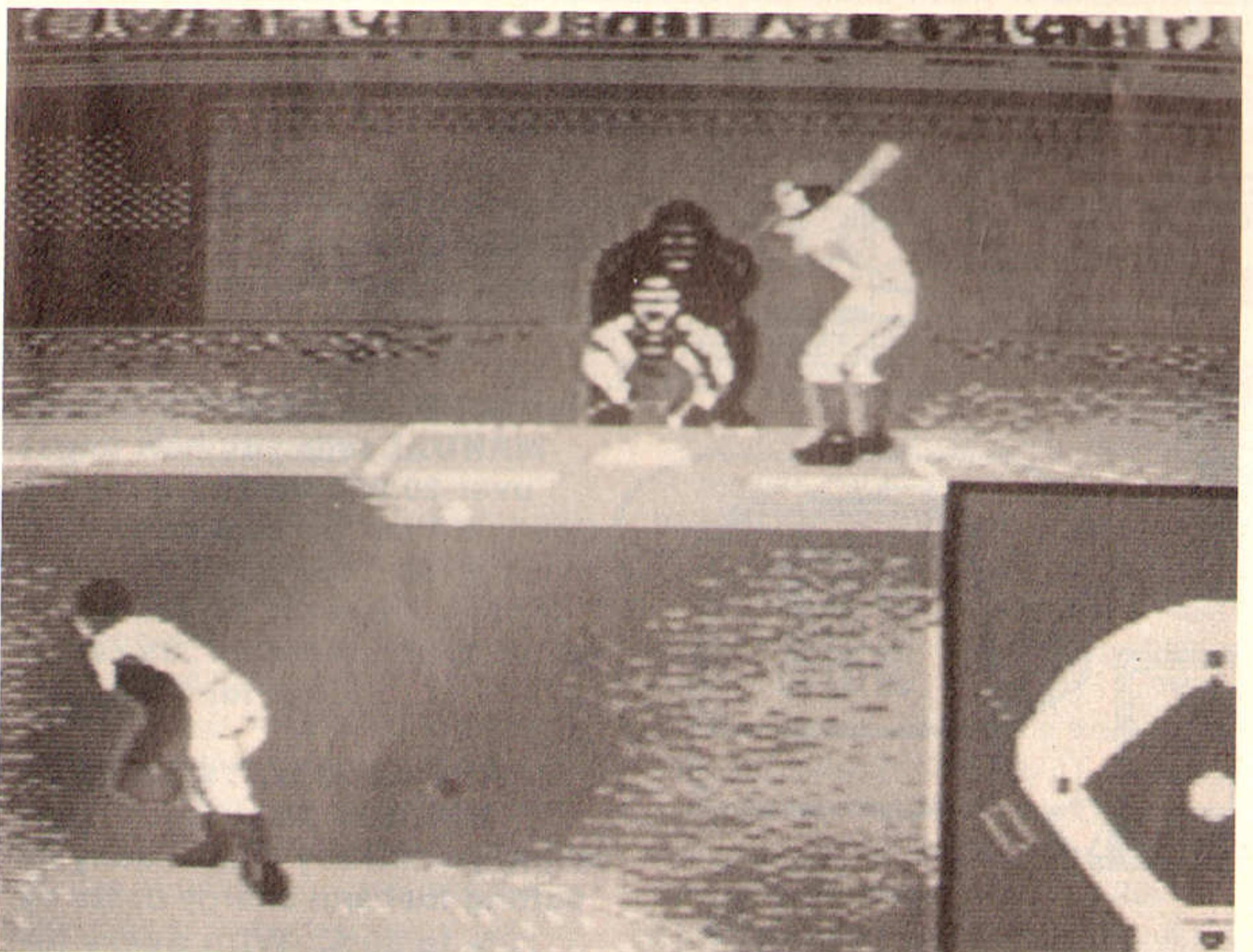
It's the player's job to make the right draft choices. Should the player choose a high-priced minor league star or an older, but more experienced Hall of Famer? All of the choices are fictitious players — some of them named after the personnel at Gamestar and its parent company, Mediagenic (formerly Activision). Besides drafting, the player, as General Manager, is put in charge of all the club's finances and player salaries.

As General Manager the player starts the game out with a \$1 million draft pool. During the decade this number increases or decreases in accordance with the performance of the team. How much it increases or decreases depends upon a number of factors: wins, losses, playoff action, and attendance. The draft consists of one page of available minor leaguers, six pages of outfielders, three pages of pitchers, and six pages of "Hall of Famers". In addition, these pages list each player's ratings in several categories.

The game also includes a variety of special features. The player can play exhibition or league games. The player also controls such things as his teams starting lineup and batting order. Pinch hitters, relief pitchers, base stealing and other usuals are also included.



Computer Play



What really impressed me about the game was its graphics. I played the game on an IBM (which isn't known for spectacular graphics) but **PENNANT FEVER** won my vote for the most detailed, colorful, and realistic looking computer baseball game! **PENNANT FEVER** supports both the CGA (color graphics adapter) and the EGA (expanded graphics adaptor) for the IBM as well as the TAN for the Tandy.

The best thing about the graphics are the various angles of the game that the computer uses. For the first time in the history of computer baseball simulations, according to Gamestar, the player views the game from down on the field rather than from up in the stands. These "true-to-life" player perspectives let players catch all the action from eight different angles — behind the plate, at each base, and the rest from outfield.

Another thing I really liked about **PENNANT FEVER** was the General Manager dimension.

It added an economic, business aspect to the game.

Sort of like Monopoly meets baseball. And in doing this, it has given the player a sense of responsibility over his new expansion team — a sense of responsibility over his new expansion team — a sense of responsibility that I have never before seen in a

computer baseball game! It really makes the player feel as if each and every regular season game is absolutely vital to win.

Before I give my complaints on the game, I think it is only fair to say that I have yet to play the actual finished version. Because of tight magazine deadlines, I was only able to play an advanced copy of the game — a 'beta copy'. A beta copy that had yet to be finished as Gamestar was adding even more features that I don't even know about yet.

Despite the fact that Gamestar calls the game "action-oriented", **PENNANT FEVER** (when I played it) was horrendously slow.

I yawned a lot. However, the IBM isn't known for its fast action. Remember, though, that I was playing a "beta copy." I fully expect the final copy to have much more action — especially on the game-oriented C64.

Furthermore, the computer opponent was just way too skilled a player. I know this is done in order to offer more skilled players a challenge, but the computer was just way too good. It seemed as if I never could do anything right. The computer creamed me. I don't remember the exact score, but it sounded more like a blowout in a football game instead of a baseball game!

The computer always caught the ball. I never could. The computer always threw strikes. I hardly ever struck the computer

out. I seemed to walk all the hitters — the ones that didn't hit home runs! Maybe I will get better after time.

Because of time considerations, I haven't played all of the available baseball games. However, out of all the different ones I have played, **PETE ROSE PENNANT FEVER** is the best simulation of baseball that I have seen. The various "on field" views really added to the game. It truly looked like I was on the field. I just didn't like the slow pace of the action. I can't wait to try the game on C64 because games for it have always been known for their fast action.

Texans (like me) are more known for their enthusiasm for football, rather than baseball. But baseball is "America's sport," and **PETE ROSE PENNANT FEVER**, with its realistic game play, added General Manager dimension, and depth of play is the computer baseball game for baseball buffs.

Circle Reader Service Number 50.

Editor's Note: The copy of **PETE ROSE PENNANT FEVER** that Rawson reviewed was in fact a PRE-beta copy. The actual final-release product includes some modifications that correct the problems that Rawson encountered during game play. Check with Gamestar for further information.

Name: **PETE ROSE PENNANT FEVER**

Type: Simulation

Formats: MS DOS, C 64

Publisher: Gamestar

Distributor: Mediagenic Inc.

Designer: Dynamix

Ages: 10 and up

players: 1-2

Requirements, MS DOS: 512K, supports EGA, CGA, C64: Joystick

Price: MS DOS: \$39.95, C64: \$34.95

Ability Level:

Advanced

Packaging:

Average (6)

Documentation:

Average (6)

Graphics:

Excellent (9)

Realism:

Excellent (9)

Playability:

Very Good (8)

CP RATING:

8.0

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A Card Collector Computerizes

By Fred Blechman

Baseball cards, first created in the 19th Century, have attracted over 400,000 collectors in the U.S.A. alone. Most of these collectors still use shoe boxes and crude pencilled lists to store and keep track of their collections.

However, many serious collectors are turning to personal computers to provide instantaneous information regarding the current value and extent of their collections, as well as providing "want lists" of cards needed to complete their collections.

If you're reading this you probably have a computer, and chances are you are also a baseball fan. You may also be among the over 400,000 U.S.A. collectors of baseball cards. If so, you will be interested in this story of a baseball card collector who computerized his collection.

Alex Oderkerken became a serious baseball card collector only about five years ago, but now has well over 20,000 cards. He evaluates and organizes them with a new computer program called "CARD/FAX." I interviewed Alex recently to find out about

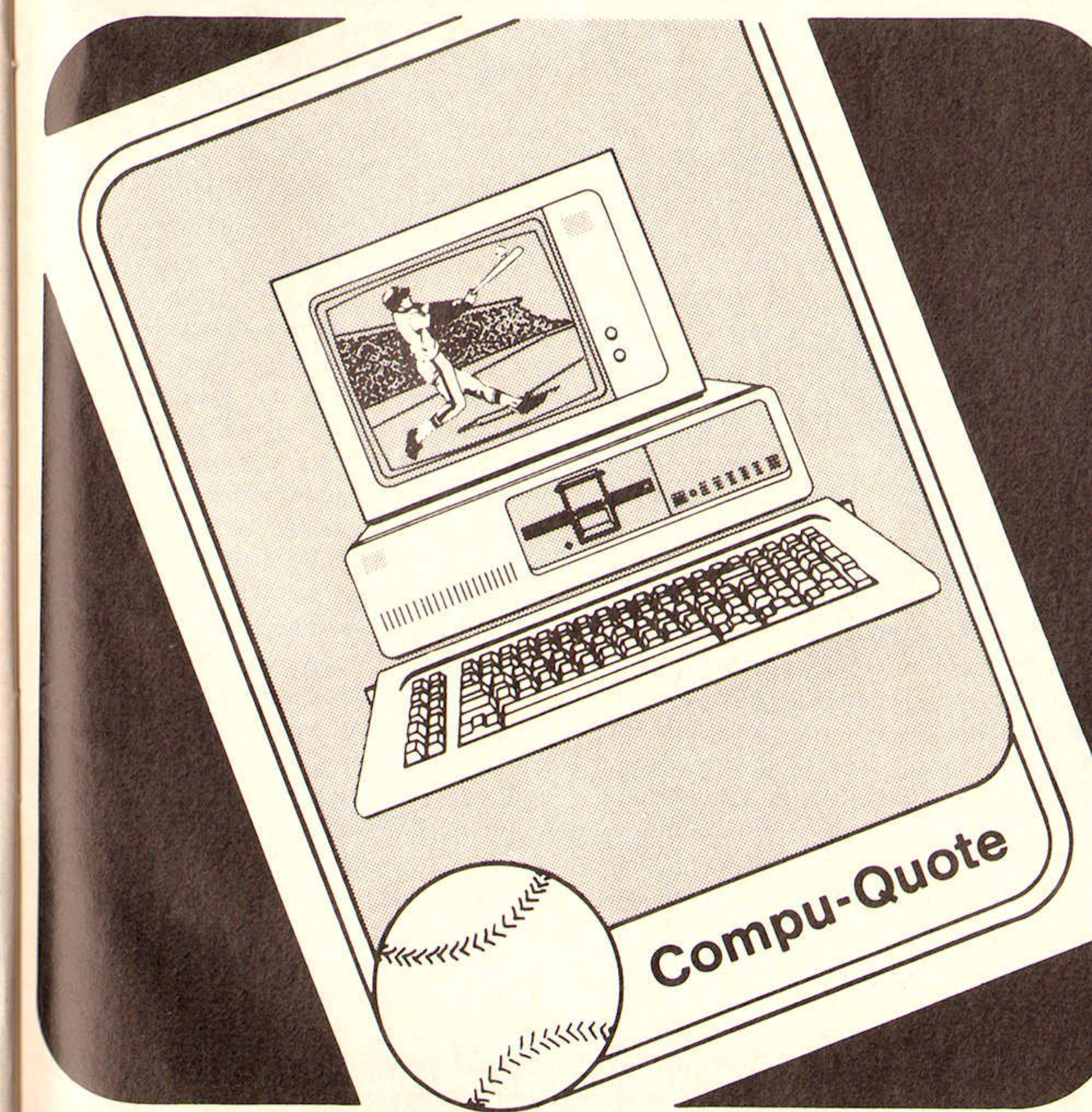
his baseball cards, and how and why he is using a computer to keep track of his collection.

Alex, now 33, married, and a resident of Southern California, was born in Holland. His family moved to the United States when he was two years old. His father's job as an aerospace engineer led to several family moves, including a four year stay in Germany.

Alex works with a major aircraft firm in the accounting department. He's an avid sports enthusiast and is active in water and snow skiing, bowling, golfing, and tennis. He and his wife also enjoy traveling, "especially to Las Vegas, where we love to play Video Poker."

Baseball is Alex's favorite sport. His initial interest in baseball cards started when he was about eight years old. "I didn't get them necessarily for collecting," Alex explained. "You just bought them because they were fun to have." He got them mostly for trading, not at all for investing. "How many eight year olds think about investing?" he pointed out. He didn't collect any particular cards, but by the time he moved to Germany a few years later he had 500 or 600 cards sitting in a box."He got involved in stamp collecting in Germany, and the cards were forgotten.

About five years ago, after over 15 years of inactivity in card collecting, Alex ran across the box of baseball cards that had been put aside so many years before. "I showed them to my brother-in-law," says Alex. "Even though he didn't have a single card himself, he found them to be interesting. We went down to a baseball card store one Saturday and both ended up buying the Topps '82 set and a few other odds and ends. From then on it sort of sprouted from there. My brother-in-



law went crazy! He's bought a lot more than I have."

Alex sold some of his stamp collection and used the money to get more baseball cards, mainly for the fun of collecting. He's not primarily interested in the investment aspects, although he is very aware of the value of his collection. "They're fun to look at," points out Alex, "but it's nice to know that the traded set that included the 1984 Dwight Gooden, that cost me \$11, sells for \$250 today. When I found my old cards, I had some Carl Yastrzemskis from 1965, and some Mickey Mantles — five or six of each. I sold and traded those to get other cards."

Alex deals mostly with a local card store, and goes to shows to buy, not to sell. He specializes in Topps cards, and buys the Topps set every year. He also gets as many Dodgers cards as he can, in both Fleer and Donruss. He looks for certain Superstars that aren't Dodgers, such as Carl Yastrzemski, Pete Rose, and Mickey Mantle.

Alex has an IBM PC/AT compatible computer with a 72-megabyte hard disk and a Seiko MP-1300 printer. It is used for home and church bookkeeping with a popular financial program called "Dollars and Sense." Alex also keeps track of his U.S. stamps collection with STAMPS, and his card collection with CARD/FAX, both programs offered by Compu-Quote (see sidebar).

I asked Alex what he saw as the advantages of using a computer. "Basically, at the touch of a finger, you have access to what your whole collection contains. In other words, if you're not on a computer, then you would have to look in your storage boxes. Although they may be marked, it still takes time to look for a particular card. That's also true if you've written everything out. That still takes time. But with a computer you can see what your total amount of cards is worth, you can go to a certain year and look at the list, or you can find a specific card and its value. The more cards you have, the more useful the program."

Once you have told CARD/FAX what cards

you have, and their condition, the benefits are at your fingertips, according to Alex. He says, "I like having the market prices in memory and everything is so well organized. With some programs you have to enter all the pricing information, but CARD/FAX has all that in data provided with the program. Within ten seconds I can answer a question about any card I have — or don't have. It's very fast and easy to use. Group entries — entering a whole set at once — saves a lot of time and effort."

What Alex likes best of all is how easy it is

to print out a Want List. "I've been frustrated many times, before I started using CARD/FAX, when I'd go to a baseball card show and not know exactly what I wanted. I either bought what I already had, or didn't buy what I didn't have! It's so nice to have that list and go down there and say I need this, or don't need that." The Want List also shows the current value for the three rated conditions of Mint, Very Good to Excellent, or Fine to Good, so you know approximately what you should pay.

When I asked Alex about any final comments, his reply was, "I love the program."

Cardfax: The Program

CARD/FAX is a program that enables the serious baseball card collector to store information regarding each card in his or her collection. Various reports are produced for investment or tax purposes. You don't need to know anything about programming in order to use CARD/FAX effectively.

CARD/FAX is available for any IBM PC or compatible with a minimum of 256K memory, two floppy disk drives (or one floppy and a hard drive), and MS-DOS 2.1 or greater, or for the Macintosh with 512K of memory and an 800k drive.

The program supports all the popular printers that print 80 characters on a line. All reports may be sent to either the screen or the printer.

A main feature of CARD/FAX is that it contains recent pricing data for thousands of cards. For example, the Topps version has data for 26,659 cards with a total value (in mint condition) of \$120,299.50. Versions for Donruss and Fleer cards are also available. It is only necessary to tell the program which cards you have and their condition.

We recently tested the IBM version. CARD/FAX includes simple user installation instructions for either two floppy drives or a hard disk. You must specify whether you have a monochrome or color monitor. It's nice in monochrome, but really a knockout in color, using yellow text on a blue background with a gray border and red highlighting. It is highly readable in either mode.

The program runs fast and very smoothly. Starting from a Main Menu, you select Card File Maintenance (add, change, delete or find individual cards) or Card Group Entry (to add

sequential groups of cards). The entry screen asks for the card year, set code (a one or two letter code which defines a particular card set for that year), card number, quantity, condition, year purchased and price paid. You can also indicate where the card was purchased, where stored, comments, and selling information when sold. The screen also displays information and recent values of the card you've specified.

Once you've made some entries you can go from the Main Menu to five different kinds of reports, including a value report and want list.

The documentation, a 28-page 5-1/2" x 8-1/2" bound booklet, is excellent. It is clearly printed, well written, and includes illustrations of typical screens and reports.

CARD/FAX is extremely useful for those wishing to buy insurance for their collection, or who need to evaluate their collection for estate planning or tax purposes.

CARD/FAX is produced by Compu-Quote, 6914 Berquist Avenue, Canoga Park, CA 91307. Their phone number is 1-800-782-6775 (818-348-3662 in California). Compu-Quote offers a CARD/FAX money-back Topps demonstration program for \$15 that applies toward the full purchase price of \$95. Additional versions, such as Donruss or Fleer, sell for \$45 each. Updates that reflect the latest market values are offered annually by Compu-Quote for \$25 each. The updates are designed to replace the old values automatically, with the computer doing all the work. Compu-Quote also sells programs for coin and stamp collectors. Contact them for further information.



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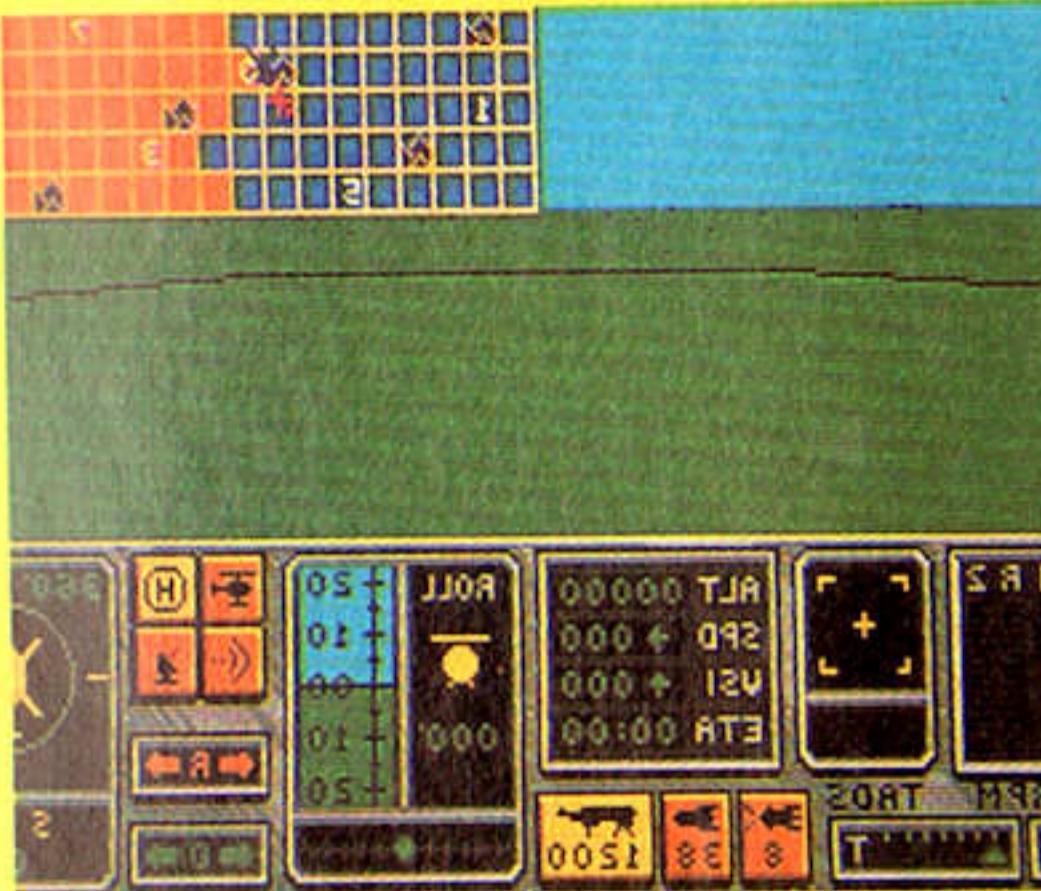
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Atari, C64/128, Apple II, IIgs, IBM



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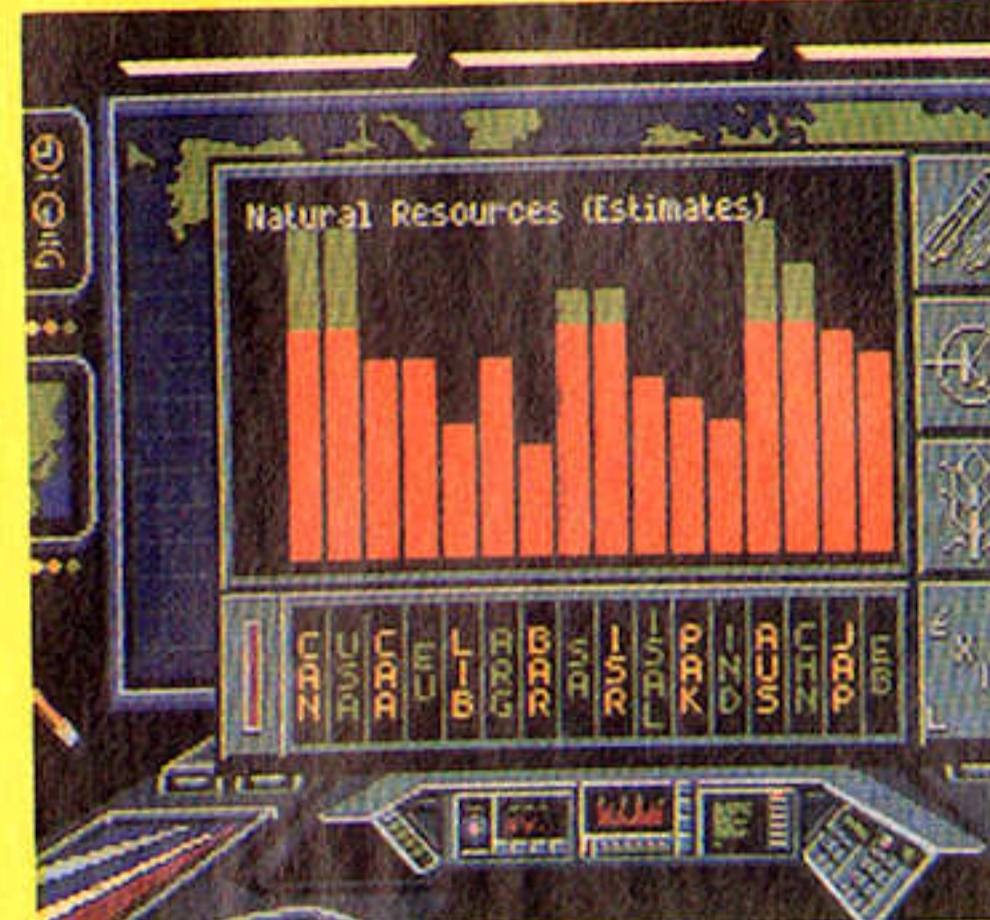
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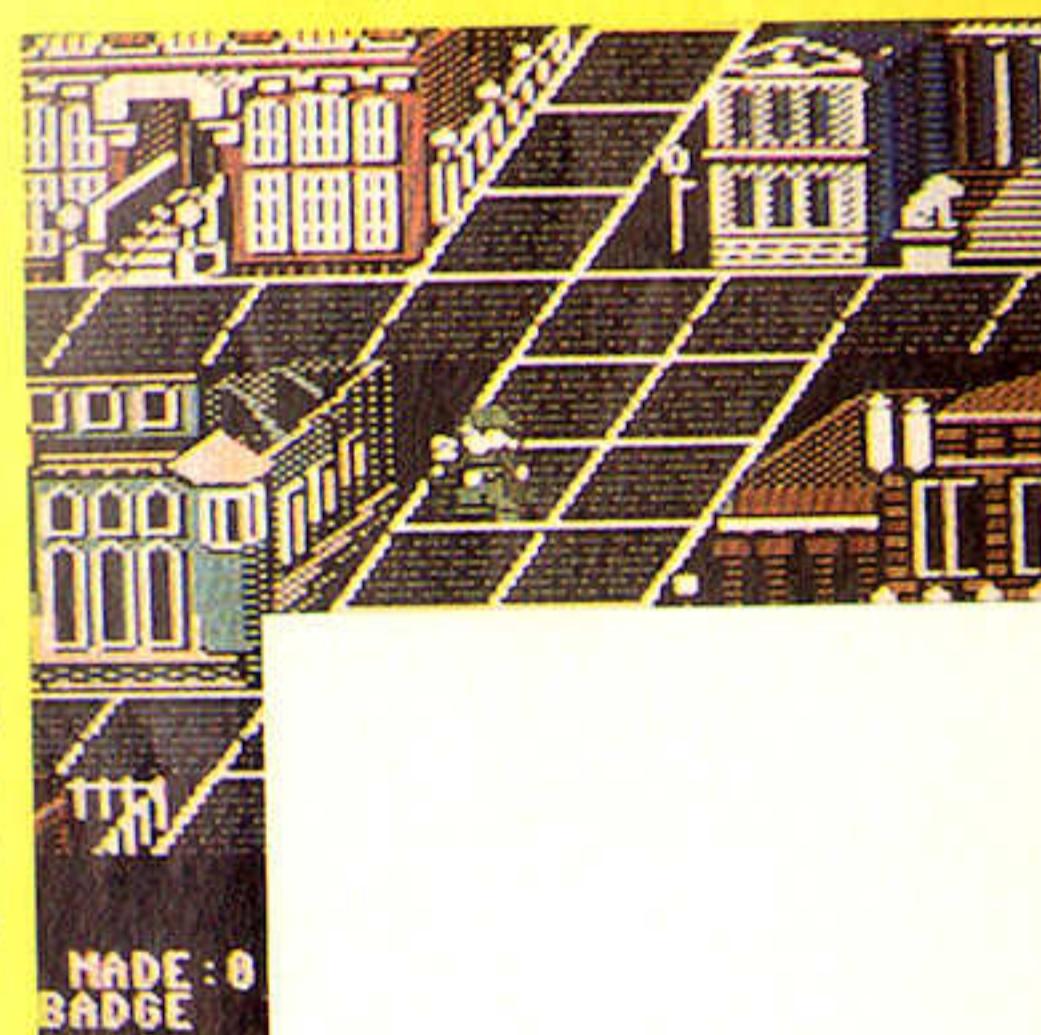


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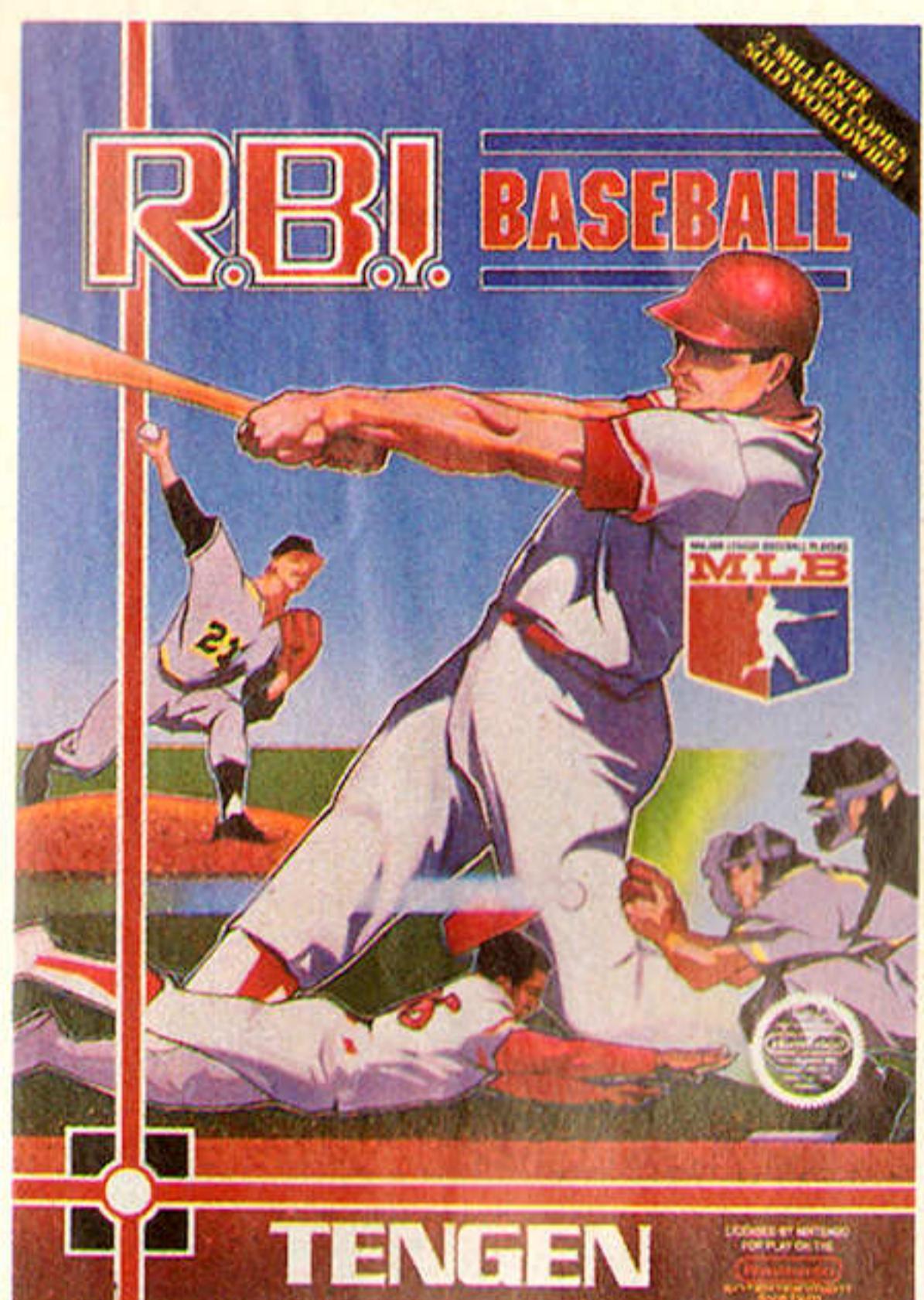


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Computer Play



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In **R.B.I. BASEBALL** the player picks pitchers and controls all swings, throws, pitches, steals, substitutions, and fielding. The rules of the game are very similar to the rules of the actual sport. If the player doesn't know much about baseball, then during the course of play, he might learn a rule or two (like I did).

The player assumes the roles of both the manager and the entire team. He can compete against the computer in a nine game season or play against a friend in a best-of-seven series. Furthermore, the player can select a "watch" mode where a computer controlled team plays another computer controlled team. In all the playing modes (one player, two player, or watch), the player selects the teams. There are 10 different

teams: California, Boston, Detroit, Minnesota, Houston, New York Mets, St. Louis, San Francisco, American, and National. Each team includes actual members from the real-life team. Also the game incorporates accurate statistics to go along with each player — statistics that actually have an effect on the game.

An on-screen display shows balls, strikes, outs, and the score. Between innings the "box score" is displayed. This is a record of all the different statistics of the game. My only complaint about this is that this "box score" comes and goes too fast. I've tried everything I can think of to make it stay so that I could study it, but as of yet, nothing has worked.

Also included on the screen below the current pitcher and hitter's name are statistics. These stats play a vital role in **R.B.I.**

50 ►



49

October, 1988

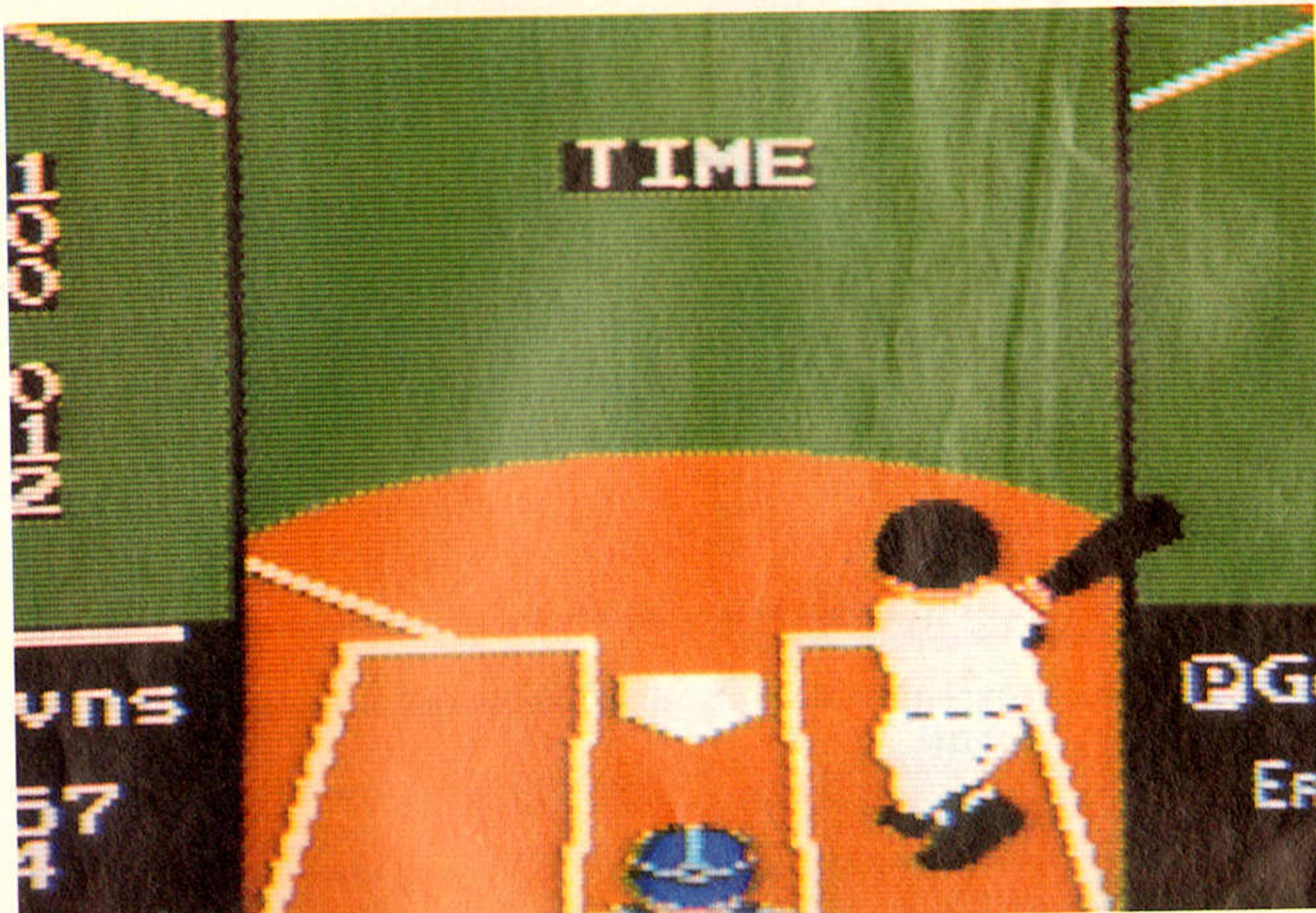
BASEBALL as they provide the player with needed information that enables him to decide whether or not he would like to bring in a relief pitcher or pinch hitter. Moreover, if a mega-hitter like Mark McGwire (who has 49 season home runs) is up to bat, then the player has a better chance of knocking out a homer, than say, if Darryl Strawberry (who has 27 season home runs) is at the plate.

The statistics are based on actual batter performance during the 1986 and 1987 seasons. They are for use though, only for the game and Tengen does not claim any statistical accuracy. Having only a slight interest in baseball, I wouldn't be able to verify the accuracy of the stats.

After each game the sports page of the local newspaper is shown. In giant headlines, it reports whether or not the home team won. This "sports page" has nothing to do with the game but it is a nice added touch.

R.B.I. BASEBALL comes with a "Player Program", a statistic handbook that helps the player get the "inside story" on the competition. Using the guide helps the player know his team better as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the other team. Since the game already incorporates a variety of statistics, it is not really necessary to use the Player Program. However, experienced and more serious players may find this added extra very useful.

Not long after I received **R.B.I. BASEBALL**, I invited a young neighbor, John, who is really into baseball to come over and tell me how he liked the game. John could just glance at names and tell me if they were good hitters or not. After we played an evening of baseball (and he slaughtered me on every game!) he told me that **R.B.I. BASE-**



BALL was the best baseball game he had ever seen for the Nintendo, and it was his favorite video baseball game ever — and believe me, he's played a lot of them!

Aside from the action, what I liked best

about the game was that it was easy to control. At first the controls were very difficult to learn. But after several games I was executing complex maneuvers almost subconsciously. It was as if I had complete control over my team, as well as the entire game. That made it much more enjoyable than other baseball games that I have played in the past.

Realistic-wise, **R.B.I. BASEBALL** isn't much like the actual sport — Tengen's game is much more entertaining. In fact, I guess you could say that I enjoy **R.B.I. BASEBALL** because it isn't like the sport! But true baseball lovers would also like the game, as was seen by John.

In the summer heat of Texas on Saturday afternoon, a Houston Astros baseball game came on television. They were playing the New York Mets. I turned the TV off, and moved the fan into the computer room. I inserted **R.B.I. BASEBALL** into my Nintendo and turned it on. After choosing the "Watch" mode, I selected the Houston Astros and the New York Mets. Then, with peanuts and Cracker Jacks in hand, I watched a more exciting, action-packed game.

Name: **R.B.I. BASEBALL**

Type: Simulation
Formats: Nintendo
Publisher: Tengen Inc.
Designer: Peter Lipson
Ages: 8 & up
players: 1-2
Requirements: None
Price: \$44.95

Difficulty Level:

Average

Packaging:

Very Good (7)

Documentation:

Average (6)

Graphics:

Very Good (8)

Realism:

Average (6)

Playability:

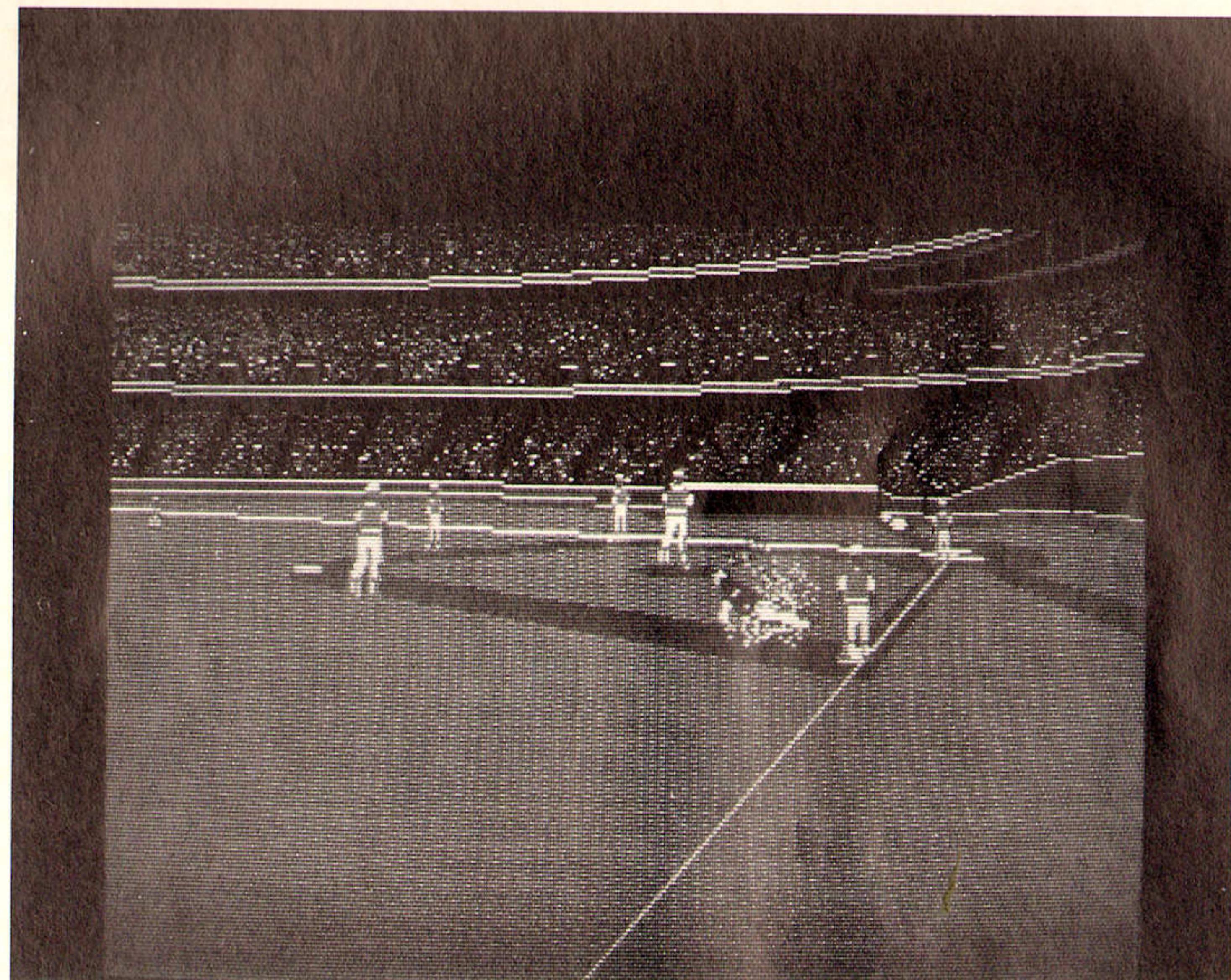
Excellent (9)

CP RATING:

7.68

Circle Reader Service Number 51.

Baseball for Anyone



By Dr. Michael W. Ecker

Computer games are fun, but often expensive. Some less expensive games compromise by cutting corners on enjoyment. ACCOLADE'S **HARDBALL!** finds a good compromise by offering an enjoyable baseball arcade game and simulation that costs just \$14.95. It is available for a wide variety of the most popular computers, though I reviewed only the PC version.

The program itself is loaded with options. You can use just a keyboard, but I urge a mouse and/or joystick as more intuitive. Not that there is anything inherently so natural about a mouse or a joystick, but anybody who has played baseball probably expects to push the joystick or mouse button to pitch a

ball or swing a bat.

Play is not difficult to learn, but the combinations of possibilities allow you to grow into more sophisticated play. An awful lot of programming has gone into **HARDBALL!**

Upon loading the PC version of the program, you are offered a choice from four video displays - amidst some clever computer-generated baseball music. I reviewed **HARDBALL!** on both a Tandy 1000 with CGA color / RGB monitor and an AT clone with EGA color. The EGA version comes as an option. While the program literature makes it sound as though the program is copy-protected, I was able to make a backup. However, because Accolade uses the same program name on both the original and the special EGA option disk I received, I could not find an obvious way to run the EGA version of the program off my hard disk.

One comment on the difference in displays: EGA gives 16-color output. It doesn't seem that fantastic until you view the relatively more crude CGA 4-color display. To my disappointment, I found that even the EGA display uses the same low-resolution text in which you can see every dot of every character, a detraction from the whole purpose of high-resolution output.

Following the display choice, the program loads a title screen, followed by some choices made by you, the team manager. Or, perhaps I should refer to managers, as the difference in input devices allows two to play, with one pitching while the other bats. Moreover, the defense also fields plays, selecting which base to throw balls to after a hit. Of course, the team hitting gets its own share of choices, including whether to steal.

The Golf Leader

By Jim Fink

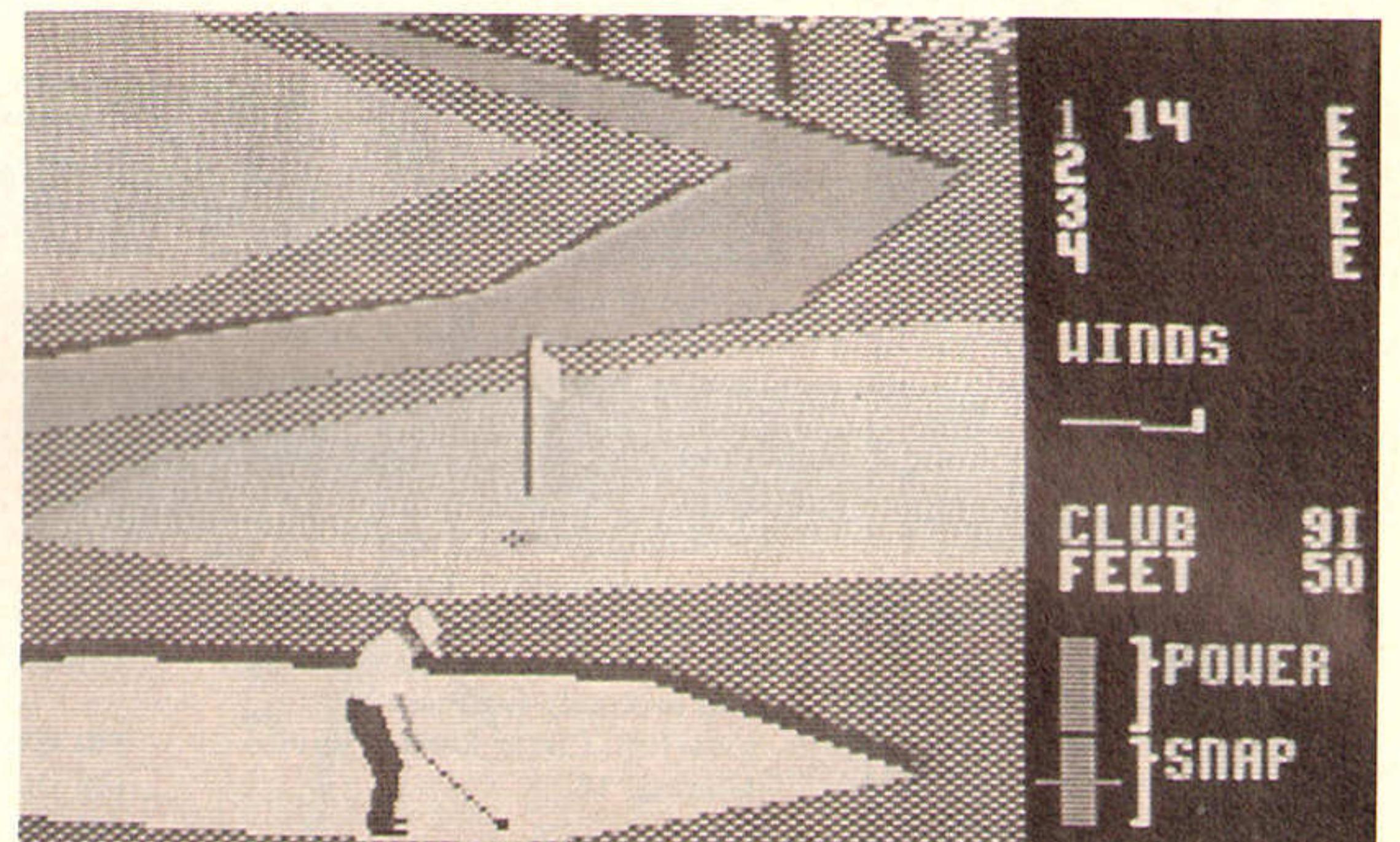
WORLD CLASS LEADER BOARD has faithfully represented every element of the game of golf that can be computerized. The only things missing are exercise, rain, and birdsong.

The game comes with 3 realistic courses; Champions — Cypress Creek (par 71), Dora 1 Country Club (par 72), St. Andrews (par 72). Each hole authentically reproduces the distance, trees, bunkers, water hazards, and rough of the prototype. Once you have mastered these, you can go onto the ultimate challenge, the mythical, aptly named, Gauntlet Country Club.

As player you must master both the long and short game at graduated levels of difficulty. In the long game, you must select the correct club for your lie, hit the ball with the right amount of power, and in the right direction. In the short game, you must judge how much power to apply to the putter, and where to aim the ball to compensate for the slope of the green. Sounds simple, and mechanically, it is. The challenge is to get progressively better — just like golf!

At the "kids" level of difficulty (there are two others, "amateur" and "professional") you will be hitting balls over two hundred yards with just a few minutes practice. The kids level only allows you to hit the ball in an absolutely straight line, and you are given a scale with which to calibrate the power of your drives and puts. Too much power and you overshoot your objective, too little and you don't reach it.

Advancing to the amateur level introduces a new component to your swing — snap. You must coordinate the power of your swing and time your snap. If you snap prematurely, the ball will hook (go left), and snapping too late will cause the ball to slice (go right). The earlier or later you snap, the greater the amount of deviation from straight. Getting your timing down will require practice and concentration, as the time window to hit the ball straight is set at the threshold of human reaction time. Once you have mastered the straight ball, you will want to experiment deliberately hooking and slicing the ball for special situations.



of the ball through the air is well depicted with hook and slice occurring relatively late in the flight, and the shadow of the ball is tracked along the course. The overall feeling is decidedly realistic. The "painting" of the screen as perspectives change is annoyingly slow, but not so much as to ruin play. Along with the above average graphics are super audio. As you swing, there is a "swoosh" noise (much better on the C64 than the C128), and an excellent "click" as you make contact at the sweet spot. Hit into the water, and you are greeted with a "splash." Best of all is the satisfying, realistic "ker-ker plunk" sound the ball makes when it drops in the cup!

If you become bored with playing the four courses provided, the game also comes with the ability to modify the pre-existing courses, or build new ones out of the old. You can even change the look of trees on the course to different types of trees and seasons of the year. An aftermarket product called **WORLD CLASS PLUS** provides additional courses.

WORLD CLASS LEADER BOARD is an excellent solitaire game, as the very nature of golf is the play of a man against himself. Better still, this is also a terrific game for the family, or for when friends drop by. Everyone intuitively knows the object and rules of golf, and the levels of difficulty allow novices to fairly compete with veterans. Most importantly, everyone has a good time.

WORLD CLASS LEADER BOARD is a superb golf simulation that is fun to play, and even more fun to keep on playing. It is well worth buying.

All-Stars		Champs	
✓ Allen, Bobby	Sw 2b 283	✓ McCall, Jerry	Rt CF 308
Jose, Guy	Lf CF 279	DeSoto, Kyle	Lf RF 317
Miller, Ricky	Rt C 305	Contos, Hank	Sw LF 319
Lorenzen, Moose	Rt 1b 275	Barnes, Willie	Lf 3b 270
Laws, Louis	Rt 3b 281	Rawlings, Chuck	Lf 1b 269
Bautista, Monte	Rt RF 280	Morra, Jackie	Rt C 211
Mattrick, Donny	Lf LF 271	Mills, Franky	Lf SS 256
Doggett, Mickey	Rt SS 268	Darien, Freddie	Sw 2b 243
Prince, Billy	Lf P	Ross, Barry	Rt P
P: Prince, Billy	Lf P	P: Ross, Barry	Rt P

his mind after selection.

On the more realistic side, the pitcher can get tired, with his fast ball slowing down a mite as time goes on, or at least the probability of a strike going down. Fortunately, after each batter, the manager's screen comes up to allow various changes.

The possibilities are only hinted at or roughly described in the tiny manual - "booklet" is a more accurate term - of 8 pages. It also explains the options for backup disks, EGA version, etc., and it is hard to tell from the booklet whether the program is copy-protected, since backups are offered for \$10, nearly the full cost of the program itself. For those with machines that use 3.5" disks, ACCOLADE makes available 3.5" disks.

If the batter connects, the displays shows the field to which it is hit. At this point, if there is a fielding play, the appropriate fielder automatically chases the ball. However, upon catching it, said player has to decide to which base to throw the ball.

Meanwhile, the batter's player should position the mouse or joystick to the location (i.e., the base) to which he wishes to run. Somewhat unrealistically, he cannot change

Name: HARDBALL!
Type: Arcade / Simulation
Formats: IBM, Apple IIgs, Atari ST, Amiga, Commodore 64;
 IBM version reviewed.
Publisher: Accolade
(Main) Designer: Bob Whitehead
Ages: 10 and up
Requirements: Vary by machine; any PC or compatible with 256K (e.g., Tandy) and graphics card; mouse or joystick recommended
Players: 1 or 2
Price: \$14.95

Difficulty: Below Average
Packaging: Very Good (8)
Documentation: Good (7)
Graphics/Text: Good to Very Good (7)
Realism: Very Good (8.5)
Playability: Very Good (8)
CP RATING: 7.78

Computer Play

More Football, Baseball and Basketball

In addition to the games reviewed in this special section, following is a listing of more football, baseball and basketball games. This list is not intended to be complete and we apologize for any games we have missed. For more information on any games in this section, use the reader service card between pages 16 and 17.

JORDAN vs BIRD: ONE ON ONE

Electronic Arts
Larry Bird takes on Michael Jordan one on one with slam dunking and three point shots. C64/128, IBM. Circle Reader Service Number 11.

MICRO LEAGUE BASEBALL

Micro League Sports
One of the most popular baseball simulations available. Set up your own league, play against the computer, against others, or watch the computer play. Apple II, C64/128, IBM. Circle Reader Service Number 12.

DR J AND LARRY BIRD GO ONE ON ONE

Electronic Arts
The predecessor to Larry playing Michael Jordan. This is a very popular game and has been out for almost five years. Circle Reader Service Number 13.

STREET SPORTS FOOTBALL

Epyx
A brand new game for the inner city kids who play sports on asphalt. It's a little rougher than your ordinary game. Apple II family, Amiga, IBM, C64/128. Circle Reader Service Number 14.

STREET SPORTS BASEBALL

Epyx
This is the same idea for baseball fans. The field has typical obstacles you might expect to find on a street, but otherwise it's still baseball. Apple II family, C64/128, IBM. Circle Reader Service Number 15.

STREET SPORTS BASKETBALL

Epyx
The third in the series that lets you play in the streets or the playground, where most of us probably played basketball. Amiga, Apple II family, C64/128, IBM. Circle Reader Service Number 16.

EARL WEAVER BASEBALL

Electronic Arts
Earl actually had a lot of input helping the designers with this game. There's lots of baseball facts and the ability to design your own park and form your own teams. Amiga, Apple II, IBM. Circle Reader Service Number 17.

STAR LEAGUE BASEBALL/ON-FIELD FOOTBALL

Activision/Mediengenic
These two games, both older releases, have been put together on one disk. They're budget priced and probably well worth it. C64/128. Circle Reader Service Number 18.

FAST BREAK

Accolade
This is a three on three basketball game for one or two players. Select plays, design your own plays and make substitutions. C64/128. Circle Reader Service Number 19.

CHAMPIONSHIP BASEBALL

Gamestar
Play with a four division 24 team league and have the advantage of split-screen graphics to view the plate and the whole field. Amiga, Apple II, Atari ST, C64/128, IBM, MAC. Circle Reader Service Number 20.

BASKETBALL: THE PRO CHOICE

Lance Haffner Games
Play with the 23 current NBA teams and over 100 teams from the past. Keep stats for an entire 82 game season. Additional team disks available. Amiga, Apple II, C64/128, IBM, MAC. Circle Reader Service Number 21.

BASKETBALL CHALLENGE

XOR
Play with 20 college teams in a real-time simulation. Play the computer, another player, or watch the computer play. IBM. Circle Reader Service Number 22.

GRAND SLAM BASEBALL

Cosmi
It's Steve Garvey vs Jose Canseco in this baseball simulation with great graphics and views of the action. C64/128. Circle Reader Service Number 23.

PURE-STAT BASEBALL

Software Simulations
Choose teams from the 1985

season or eight great teams from the past and play with the computer or another player. All player statistics are kept. Appelle, C64/128, IBM. Circle Reader Service Number 24.

4TH & INCHES

Accolade
Watch this game from the press box as you choose offensive and defensive plays, keep statistics and monitor the players' energy level. Amiga, Apple IIgs, C64/128, IBM, MAC. Circle Reader Service Number 25.

PROCHALLENGE BASEBALL

JBE Ltd.
Act as manager in this officially licensed simulation. Choose defensive formations and offensive plays using lineups from the 26 major league teams. IBM. Circle Reader Service Number 26.

FOOTBALL

Software Simulations
One or two players can call the shots from the sidelines and control the quarterback and receivers on offense and one defensive player. C64/128, IBM. Circle Reader Service Number 27.

PURE-STAT COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Lance Haffner Games
Play full-court five on five action with 20 all-time great college teams. Outcomes are based on statistics and optional team disks are available. Apple II, C64/128, IBM. Circle Reader Service Number 28.

FULL COUNT BASEBALL

Lance Haffner Games
Choose from 26 current major league teams or 52 great teams from the past. Players can be drafted or traded and complete statistics are kept. Apple II, C64/128, IBM. Circle Reader Service Number 29.

FINAL FOUR COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Lance Haffner Games
Coach one of 286 current NCAA teams or 70 all-time great teams to reach the championship of the college world. Amiga, Apple II, C64/128, IBM. Circle Reader Service Number 30.

GRIDIRON

Bethesda Softworks
Coach your team by calling plays, controlling the ball carrier, and substituting. There are 40 offensive plays to call and you can make your own. Amiga, Atari ST. Circle Reader Service Number 31.

HEADCOACH

MicroSearch
As the name states, you're the head coach in this football strategy game. Play results are determined from actual statistics. Create your own teams. Amiga. Circle Reader Service Number 32.

MAC PRO FOOTBALL

Avalon Hill
One or two people can play this game where results are determined by the ability of the player's coaching ability. Additional team disks are available. MAC. Circle Reader Service Number 33.

MONDAY MORNING MANAGER

TK Computer Products
Play with teams from 1905-1985 as well as four All-Star teams. Draft your own teams, make trades, and keep stats. Additional team disks available. Circle Reader Service Number 34.

NBA

Avalon Hill
Select from 20 great teams from the past in this statistical game that allows one or two players and an automatic computer mode. Apple II, C64/128, IBM. Circle Reader Service Number 35.

3 IN 1 COLLEGE & PRO FOOTBALL

Lance Haffner Games
Pick from 176 college teams and 28 pro teams and keep statistics for each team and player as well as game results. Additional team disks available. Amiga, Apple II, Atari ST, C64/128, IBM, MAC. Circle Reader Service Number 36.

STATUS PRO BASEBALL

Avalon Hill
Use actual major league statistics as you manage your team. Then hit, pitch and field as a player. Additional major league season disks available. Apple II, C64/128, IBM. Circle Reader Service Number 37.

Channel Three

Nintendo games and Sega 3-D

By Mark DeCarlo

Sure, it's fun to sit alone for hours moving Super Mario around a sewer, but sooner or later you've got to hang out with human beings and experience the thrill of victory and inflict the agony of defeat. So forget dragons, grenades, and blood-sucking monsters for a while, this month we're looking at sports. Just sports.

This month's sports cartridges blend great graphic video and actual people to bring new excitement to your Nintendo system. Suddenly, you've made it to the big leagues. You and a flesh and blood friend can battle it out on a televised sports broadcast. (Big deal, it's only broadcast in your house . . . but it's a start.) So grab a buddy and plant yourselves in front of your video stadium. If you listen closely you can hear the Star Spangled Banner . . .

BASEBALL: (Nintendo; one or two players)
One of the real joys about playing video games, in the comfort and privacy of your own home, is the action. And as far as that goes, this cart is already a classic.

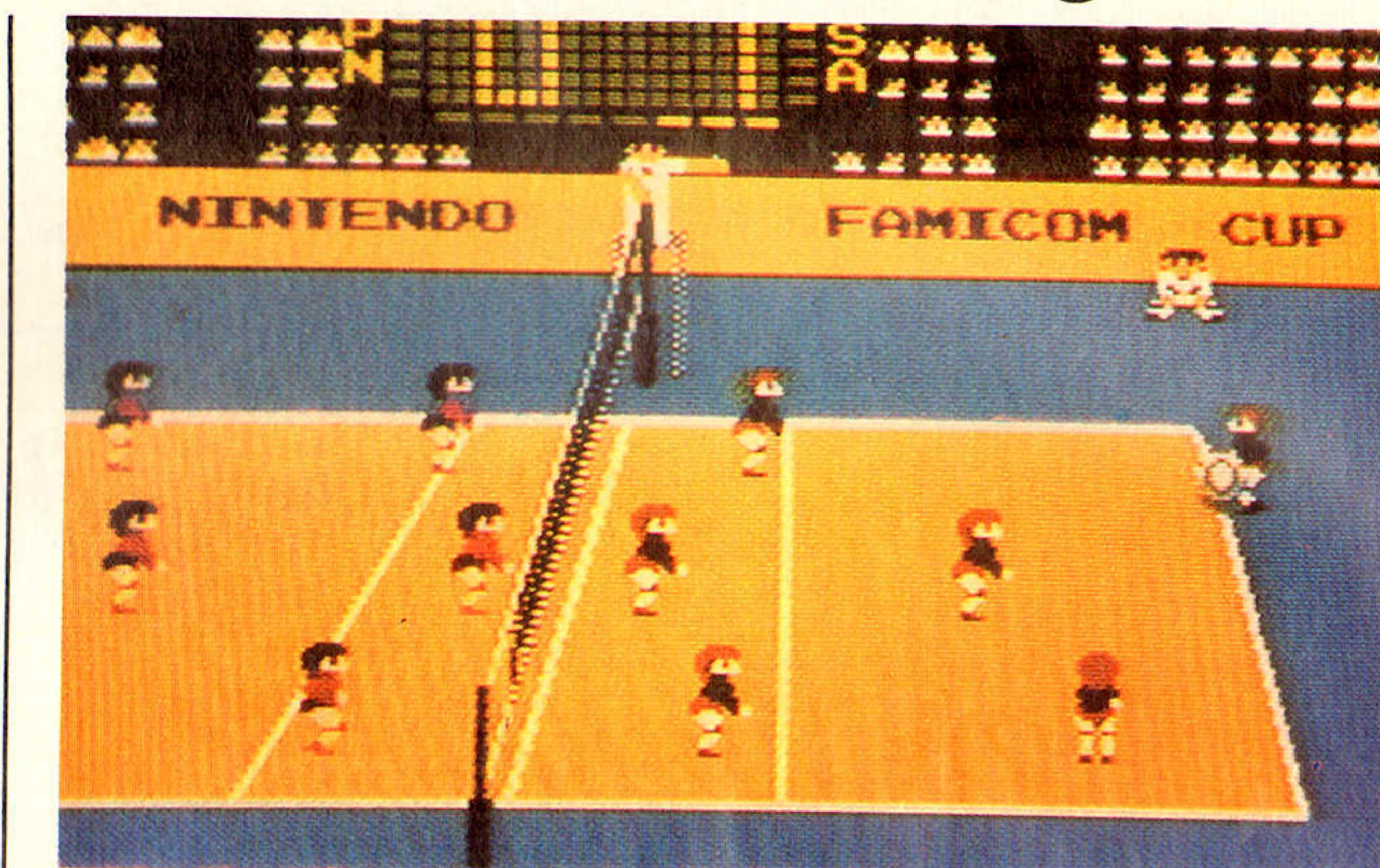
BASEBALL brings complete teams of colorful players who pitch, hit, and run at your discretion into your living room. Great leaping plays and stupid, bonehead errors are all part of what it takes to make it through nine innings of feverish competition. This cart walks a nice line between a complex, stat-heavy realistic game, and an easy, fun to play video game. It's ideal for the whole family. Anyone who can watch a game on TV can play well in just a few games.

There are two modes; vs. the computer, and two player combat. For starters, it's better to play against the computer to get a feeling for the flow of the contest, but the real fun starts when you square off against a pal.

The game begins with the selection of teams from the league roster. Each team seems to have different strengths and weaknesses, but play them all to find your favorites. The rest is pretty much just like playing baseball.

Unlike some other more technical, strategy-oriented games, **BASEBALL** is easy to understand and master. Stealing, bunting, hit and runs are all plays at your command, but can take some time to get down. Play run and gun, or conservative as you manage to destroy the last shred of your pal's self-respect.

On defense, your pitcher can throw just about anything: from 100mph+ fastballs to vicious sliders: the key to success lies in the pitcher's arm. Keep your opponent off balance with a dazzling array of pitches. Then, if by some fluke, some bum actually hits one of your offerings, you've got to make the play. Move your fielder into position, leap into the



air to snag the high bounce then fire the throw to first.

A simple caution, important enough to warrant its own paragraph: Beware of the rundown. Someday, you'll fully understand this sentence and don't say I didn't warn you.

At the plate make sure you've settled into a comfortable spot in the box before the pitch. Time your swing to drop a double down the right field line, or swing for the fences. The crowd goes nutty over a four-bagger! Make sure you get a good jump on the steal or you're dead, their catcher has a golden arm.

As the game begins to wind down in the late innings, keep the ball away to guard against the long ball. Then, when all the dust has settled, one player will remain standing. Savor your victory. Cherish it, because chances are the next time you'll get your cleats kicked.

Nintendo BASEBALL is a fun, easy to learn competition game. Graphics are excellent, action is excellent, and control command is precise.

VOLLEYBALL: (Nintendo; one and two players)
Of all the sports carts we've seen, this has got to be the toughest to master.

Nintendo has done an admirable job of configuring the controller to make this game as realistic as possible, so as a result it's hard to learn. But don't let that scare you off one of the wildest games on the market. If you had something better to do, would you be reading this? Good point.

There are seven teams to compete against, from worst to best; USSR, China, Cuba, Japan, Brazil, Korea, Tunisia. These ratings are based on 1981 and 1985 World Cup play. You are the

good old US of A.

The ball moves slower in training mode, so start there. Here you can practice serving, blocking, setting, and my personal favorite: spiking! From the controller, you command an entire team. Serves and shots can be placed virtually anywhere on the opposing court, with a variety of speed.

Strategy from the real Volleyball applies here as well. Sets and spikes account for much of the scoring, once you've learned how to pull it off. The graphics do a good job simulating how real Volleyball looks on television and after awhile you can believe these are real people bouncing balls off each other's heads. For you hardcore volleyball fans, here is the complete shot list from the controller summary: Serve, receive, set, spike, block, feint, double spike/direct spike, quick set.

In addition to these commands, you can also bring your team together on the floor and move them back again. As I mentioned, figure on taking some time with this one, but it's well worth it. You never know, maybe this will be a new Olympic sport in 1992.

MIKE TYSON'S PUNCH-OUT!! (Nintendo; one player)
What will they think of next? Now you can get your bell rung and walk away without a scratch. Of course, there are still unfair refs and bogus judges — after all, this is BOXING!

In this cart, you work your way up through the minor and major circuits to earn a shot at the champ. Little Mac (you) starts his career in the minor circuit against Glass Joe and progresses from there. Each successive fighter

has a short bio and stat history that can give you some insight into how to beat him.

But Little Mac isn't alone. Doc Louis, his fearless trainer is always in his corner, shouting hints and pounding his fist on the canvass as he cheers young Mac to victory.

This game is about as realistic as you'd want to get as far as boxing goes. There is lots of punching and sweating, but you don't need paramedics when you're done playing.

Each successive fighter on Little Mac's journey to the top is a bit tougher. So by the time you've won a few bouts, you're fighting some mean dudes; Piston Honda, Soda Popinski, and King Hippo are just a few of the bodies that stand between you and Mr. Tyson.

The controller gives you the power to punch, jab, uppercut and dodge. The hard part is doing all those things at the right time. **PUNCHOUT** is definitely a game that will take some time to master. The basic fighting moves are well placed on the controller and the sense of accuracy is good. As with any game, the level needed to survive involves a certain degree of practice and expertise. Graphics are good and fun. They've done a good job making you feel as though you're in the ring with these monsters, the expressions are great.

The only drawback is that there is no two-person play. However, this is easily overlooked since several players can be climbing the ladder in a race to the champ. Incidentally, I've been told that if you beat the video Mike, the REAL Mike will come to your house and wait for you in the bushes. Something to consider.

The cart has a built in memory/password system that allows you to fight and then stop without loosing your ranking, which is a nice feature since there is no way anyone can whip all these guys in a single sitting. Fight clean, keep your controllers above the belt and come out fighting.

TENNIS: (Nintendo; one player) Once again those nuts at Nintendo have managed to effectively translate a fast-moving, difficult sport into two dimensions for your television. **TENNIS** features all the rules and shots of the real game in a well designed package. There are two tennis games that can be played: singles or doubles, both being played against the computer. The singles match is just you vs. the gray box, while doubles allows you and a friend to play as a team against the vicious team **Nintendo**.

The controller allows you to move your player up and back as well as side to side, while the A button is used for serving and ground strokes. The B button is used for lob shots.

The graphics are unusually good in showing perspective and ball movement. Since a lot of the action is back and forth, the size and motion of the ball have been carefully detailed

to allow our eyes to think they "see" the depth of the court.

It's probably a good idea to start learning this game in level 1, then gradually move up to 5, the most difficult playing pace.

You've got complete control of the type of shot used. By positioning your player and using the right buttons, you can combine a series of overhead slams, lobs, and backhands into a winning formula. Sets are made up of

six games, just like in real Tennis. The match champion is the winner of two out of three sets. If you can win your match, you even get a trophy. The only fun aspect of real Tennis missing here is the opportunity to complain to the line judge. Somehow it just isn't the same screaming at your TV.

We've got more new releases next month but until then . . . PLAY BALL!

Sega 3-D Glasses

By Rusel DeMaria

This is the first of a series of special reports we've planned on video game systems. These reports will take a critical look at specific systems, hardware add-ons, and comparable games.

This first report looks at Sega's 3D glasses and some of the games that use them. These glasses are examples of an advanced technology called Liquid Crystal Shutters (LCS).

The principle behind the operation of the LCS glasses is that people see in three dimensions because of the slight separation of our two eyes. Try looking at the world with one eye shut and you'll see the difference. So the LCS system displays two alternating sets of images on the screen. These images are slightly offset, and they alternate at a set rate.

The glasses, in the meantime, electronically alternate the electronic shutters, causing you to see from one eye, then the other. The alternations are very fast, and the result is that you think you are seeing one three-dimensional image.

So much for technology, but does it work?

In fact, it works very well. If the image separation is sufficient, you see realistic depth. However, the effectiveness of this technique depends on how well the programmers have created the images, and how much of the game is created with separation.

I first heard about this technique when investigating a story about CAD 3D on the Atari ST from Antic Software (the program has evolved into Antic's incredible product,

CYBERSTUDIO). At the time, I was told that this technology had originally been developed by Tektronics for military applications. However, Sega representatives tell me that their version was internally developed.

I saw three games for the Sega system — **3D ZAXXON**, **3D MISSILE DEFENSE**, and **3D MAZE HUNTER**. Of the three, **MAZE HUNTER** offered the most spectacular effect with its multi-dimensional walls and pathways. Although the game is not one of the most

captivating I've ever seen, the 3D effect is well worth seeing.

3D MISSILE DEFENSE uses the Light Phaser and the 3D Glasses together. In it, you must shoot enemy ICBMs as they are launched toward one of several cities. If you miss any during the launch phase, you can shoot them from an orbiting satellite as they traverse the globe. If you miss any of those, your last chance is to shoot them as they head down into the target city. This is a fast moving, difficult game, though it would be almost as much fun without the 3D effect, which is nice, but not spectacular.

3D ZAXXON is a straight-on view of the popular Zaxxon game, and here, the 3D effect enhances the game, though it isn't as spectacular as the effect in **MAZE HUNTER**. Still, Zaxxon is a tried and true favorite, and people who liked the original should love this version in 3D.

Several more 3D games are coming for the Sega system, and we'll report on them as they appear.

The LCS system beats any other 3D system I've seen on a micro computer or home gaming system. It's simply the best low cost 3D system currently available, and is far beyond the traditional red/blue glasses familiar to moviegoers (and, incidentally, still used by Nintendo).

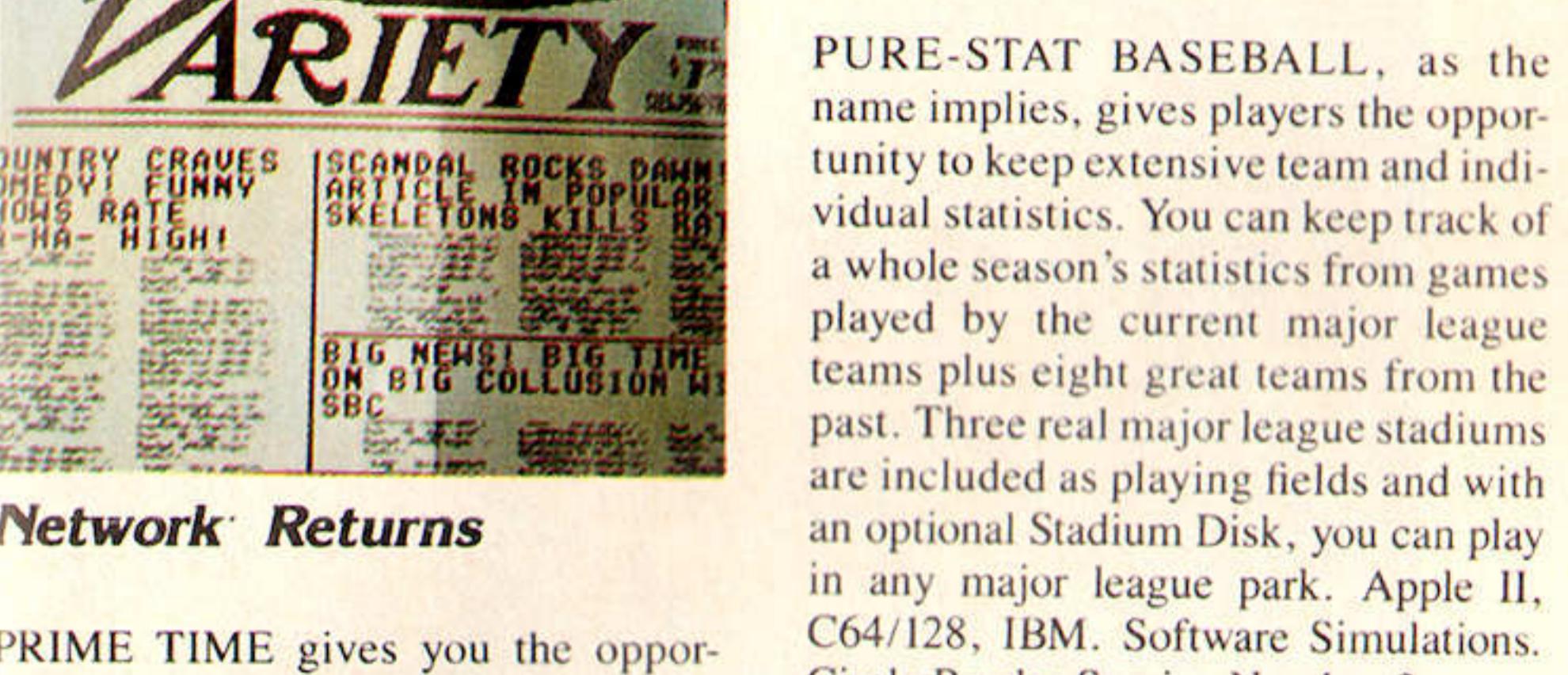
As a footnote, ANTIC has three 3D games for the Atari ST. They are **3D BREAK-THRU** (a breakout game from a 3D perspective), **SHOOT THE MOON** (sort of Space Invaders 3D style), and **LCS WANDERER** (a space adventure with minimal use of the 3D system). For people who want to create their own 3D animations and objects, **ANTIC'S CYBERSTUDIO** is unbeatable. If you have an Atari ST, you'll want to check it out. I've also heard rumors that a similar system is in development for the Amiga.

Antic Software
544 Second St.
San Francisco, CA 94107
800 234-7001
StereoTek Glasses for Atari ST: \$149.95

Sega 3D Glasses — \$59.95

Snapshots

Play Ball!



Network Returns

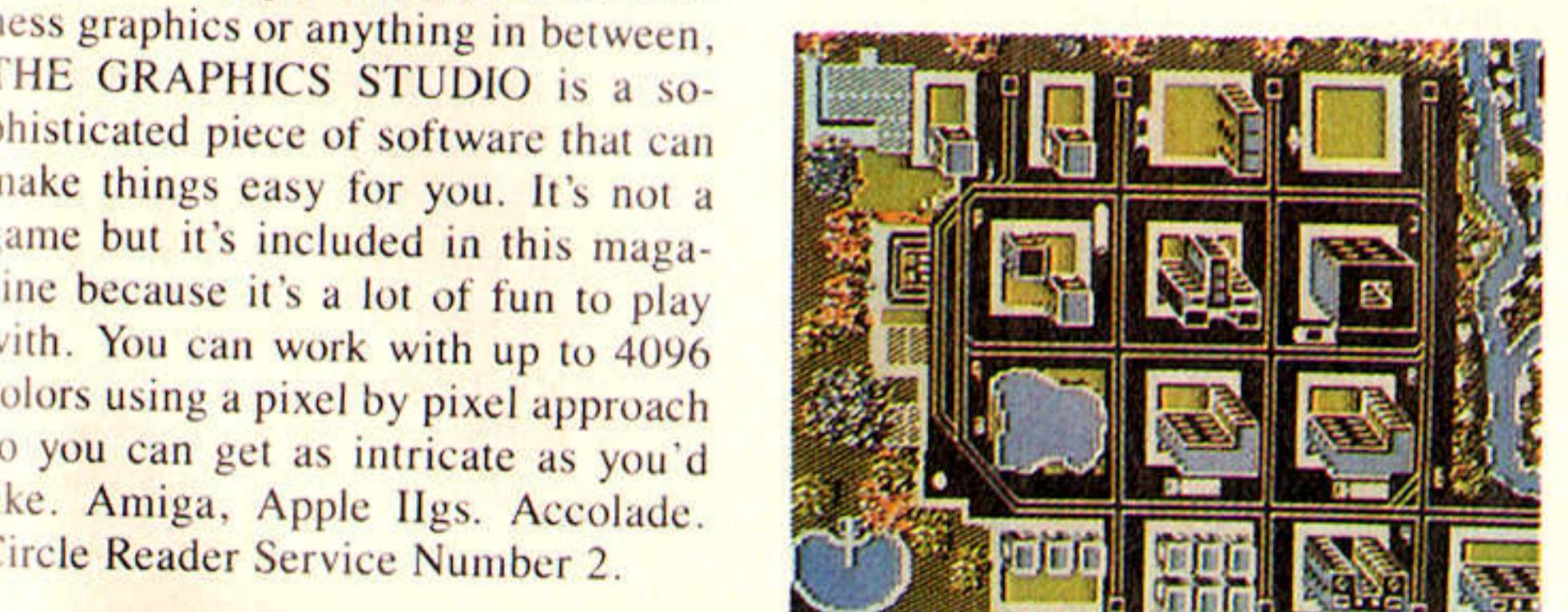
PRIME TIME gives you the opportunity to stop complaining about bad TV shows and create some of your own. Take over as chief of programming for a major network and put a schedule of shows on the air in an attempt to become Number 1 in the ratings game.

You can create shows, shuffle lineups, cancel losers and everything else a programming executive can do. IBM, C64/128, Amiga, Atari ST, MAC. First Row. Circle Reader Service Number 1.



The Art of War

Have you ever wanted to play Henry Kissinger, or Prince Machiavelli? Think you'd be a great negotiator or diplomat? Well then try DIPLOMACY. It's been around for a while but it's still a great game and will test your diplomatic and wargaming abilities. It will remind you of chess in that it's easy to learn but difficult to master. Play by yourself or with up to six others as you maneuver for the advantage in pre-World War I Europe, making alliances and treaties--and breaking them. IBM, Apple II family, C64/128, Epyx. Circle Reader Service Number 9.



Casey Jones Lives

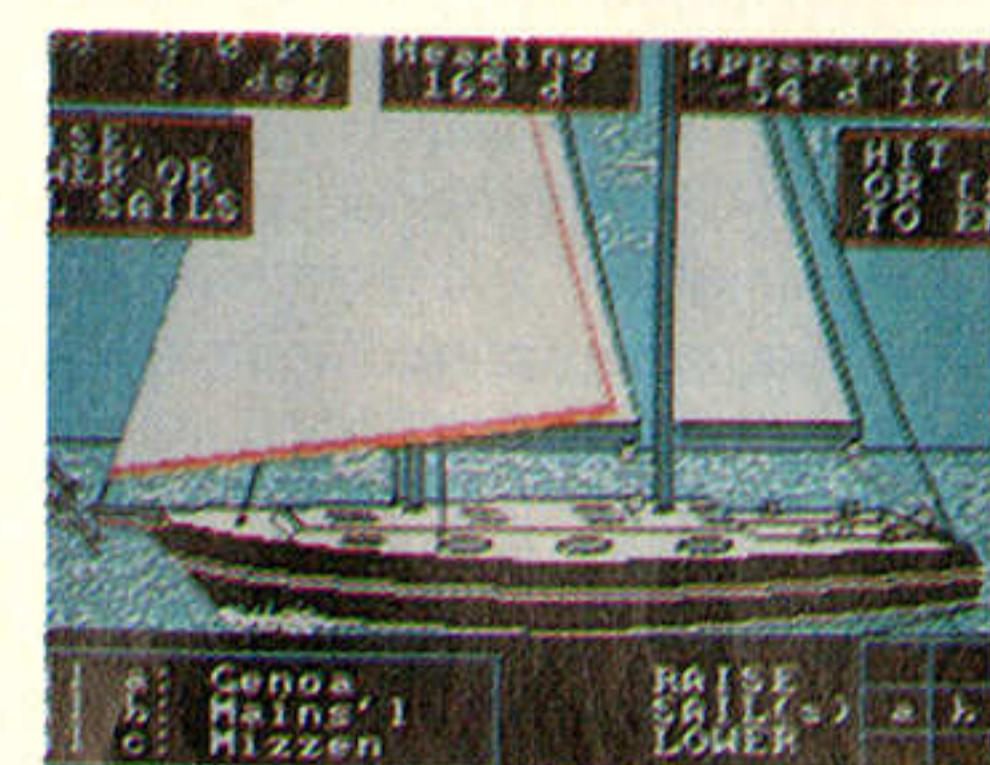
DESIGN YOUR OWN TRAIN gives you a chance to put together your own transit system using trains, trolleys, subways or even buses. You can make your systems as simple or complex as you wish and run them in either a manual or automatic mode. There are four independently controllable trains, up to 26 operating switches, 99 layout speeds, operating freight sta-

tions and a lot more. You can even design your own locomotive. Apple II family, IBM, Abracadata. Circle Reader Service Number 8.



Street Ball

Not everyone had a chance to grow up playing sports on nice green fields. STREET SPORTS FOOTBALL is for those who played sports down and dirty in the streets. It's tackle football on the concrete and asphalt of the neighborhood and you have your pick of nine hoodlums to be on your team. You can use plays from a playbook or design your own. There are beginner and advanced levels and you can go against the clock or to a pre-set score. Amiga, Apple II family, C64/128, IBM, Epyx. Circle Reader Service Number 7.



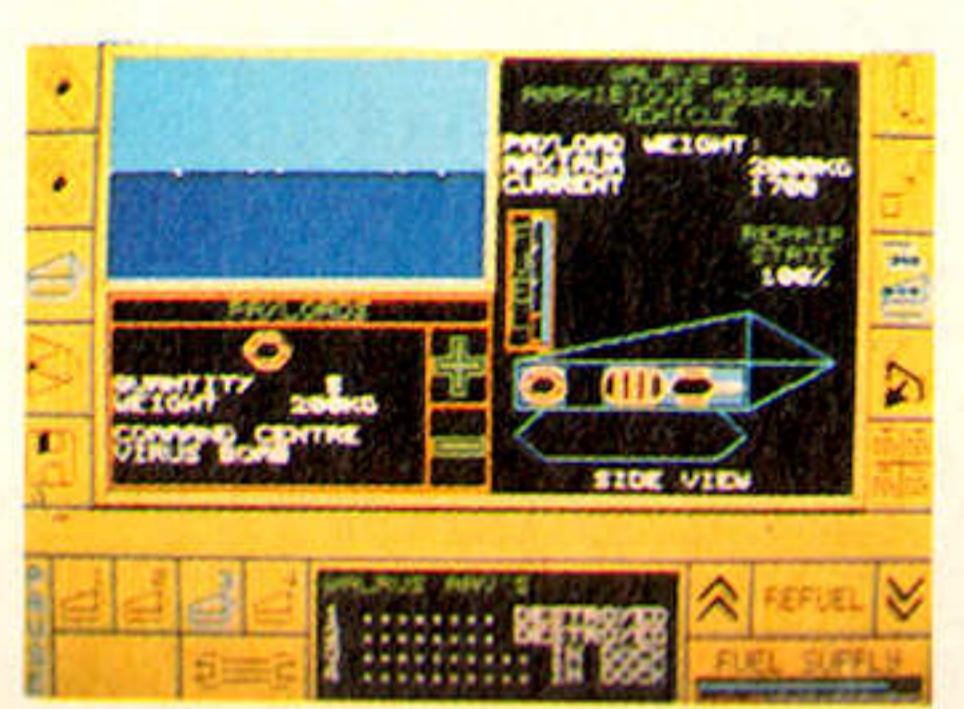
Hoist that Jib

Miss sailing in the winter months? Not any more. SAILING SIMULATOR will keep you plowing through the waves year round, navigating your boat through nine different courses on each of eight voyages. Everything you need to do on an actual boat is covered, from choosing sails to navigating. There's a full instrument panel display for all navigation information and charts are derived from actual NOAA charts. IBM, Dolphin Marine Systems. Circle Reader Service Number 10.



Big Business

OLIGOPOLY allows you to recreate the world of big business and high finance as you struggle to make your way to the top of the heap in the international arena. Two to six players are needed to wage financial war as they try to put together monopolies in the petrochemical, manufacturing, electronics and textile industries. The object is, of course, to become the richest person in the world and you can even buy countries. IBM, MAC, XOR. Circle Reader Service Number 6.



The cover of this game tells you that you will learn to be afraid, very afraid. It must be the vampires and Count Dracula that manage to do it. After all, it is VAMPIRE'S EMPIRE and you, as Dr. Van Helsing, must fight your way through the empire to meet the evil count face to face. You'll need your Magic Light, mirrors and lots of garlic. There are 240 screens and lots of graphics. Amiga, Atari ST, C64/128, DigiTek. Circle Reader Service Number 5.

Island Warfare

It's the 22nd century and the natives are restless. Actually, they're not natives but international terrorists who are destroying a group of islands in the Southern Ocean one by one. Unfortunately, these islands are desperately needed by the rest of the world to help alleviate a world wide energy crisis. You must use your supercarrier and its complement of aircraft and amphibious vehicles to combat the terrorists and save the islands. CARRIER COMMAND combines strategy and arcade action along with great graphics. Atari ST, IBM, Rainbird. Circle Reader Service Number 7.

MacGames

By Rusel Demaria

What's Available for Your Mac

Some new products have hit my desk recently. I've got great solitaire and air hockey extraordinaire. Tops among the new offerings is **CHUCK YEAGER'S ADVANCED FLIGHT TRAINER** (AFT) from Electronic Arts. I guess I like this game especially because it works in color on a Mac II, and even uses all of a large screen monitor if you have one. Admittedly, some of the glitter is lost on a standard Mac, but not all.

AFT is a combination test pilot simulation, flight simulator, and flight trainer. In it you can test fly a variety of real and experimental craft. You can also try your hand at stunt flying, airplane racing, and formation flying. If you are a novice flier, Chuck will guide you through basic flying techniques.

Flying a fairly ordinary plane like the Cessna 172 Skyhawk or the Piper Cherokee is fun, and for practice, these 'personal' planes are good. But for real high speed thrills, you can try flying an F18 Hornet, and if you have a death wish, fly the XRH-4 MadDog (dubbed by Yeager "a test pilot's nightmare").

This program is divided into several parts. For novice fliers, there's the flight instruction which lets you learn the basics of standard flying, and a few stunts, all the while guided by on-screen prompts. Once you master the basic moves, you can just fly around the artificial world provided for this program. There are several thousand square miles of landscape, dotted with geometrical objects like giant pyramids and spheres, as well as slalom courses, race courses, and landing strips. You can fly to your heart's content. Of course, it takes a while to traverse this made-up landscape in a slow plane like a Sopwith Camel, but not long at all in a supersonic reconnaissance craft like the Lockheed SR-71 that can exceed mach 3. In the SR-71, you can really test your limits.

Speaking of testing, this program can teach you a lot about planes in general, and more about test piloting than any other simulation. There is a whole checklist of procedures and tests, and if you have some patience and imagination, you can take one of the experimental aircraft and try to survive the process of taking it to its limits. If you don't survive, if you auger in, as the test pilots say it, you are greeted by General Yeager's stern visage and his digitized voice (yes, his own voice) saying, "I don't even know you," or "Now that's a sorry way to land an airplane." Well, what did you expect, sympathy? Dead test pilots don't need it.

Anyway, just for fun you can race on one of several courses, perform stunt flying in formations, or even record your own stunts. I'm not a pilot, so I can't judge this program against real-

The game itself is quite fun, and full of op-

ity, but I have lots of fun with it. Further, though it doesn't have the real airports and landscapes of other flight programs, or the excitement of dogfighting or other warfare, it has plenty to offer. Also, I understand that a more martial program is being developed under General Yeager's auspices. That will be something to look forward to.

On a Mac II, this program is great fun. It is in vivid color, for one thing, and the sounds are great. There is really a sense of power when you lift off in an F18 or SR-71. In fact these planes are so fast and so responsive, that I found it hard to control them with the mouse. That's why I was thrilled when I discovered CH Products'

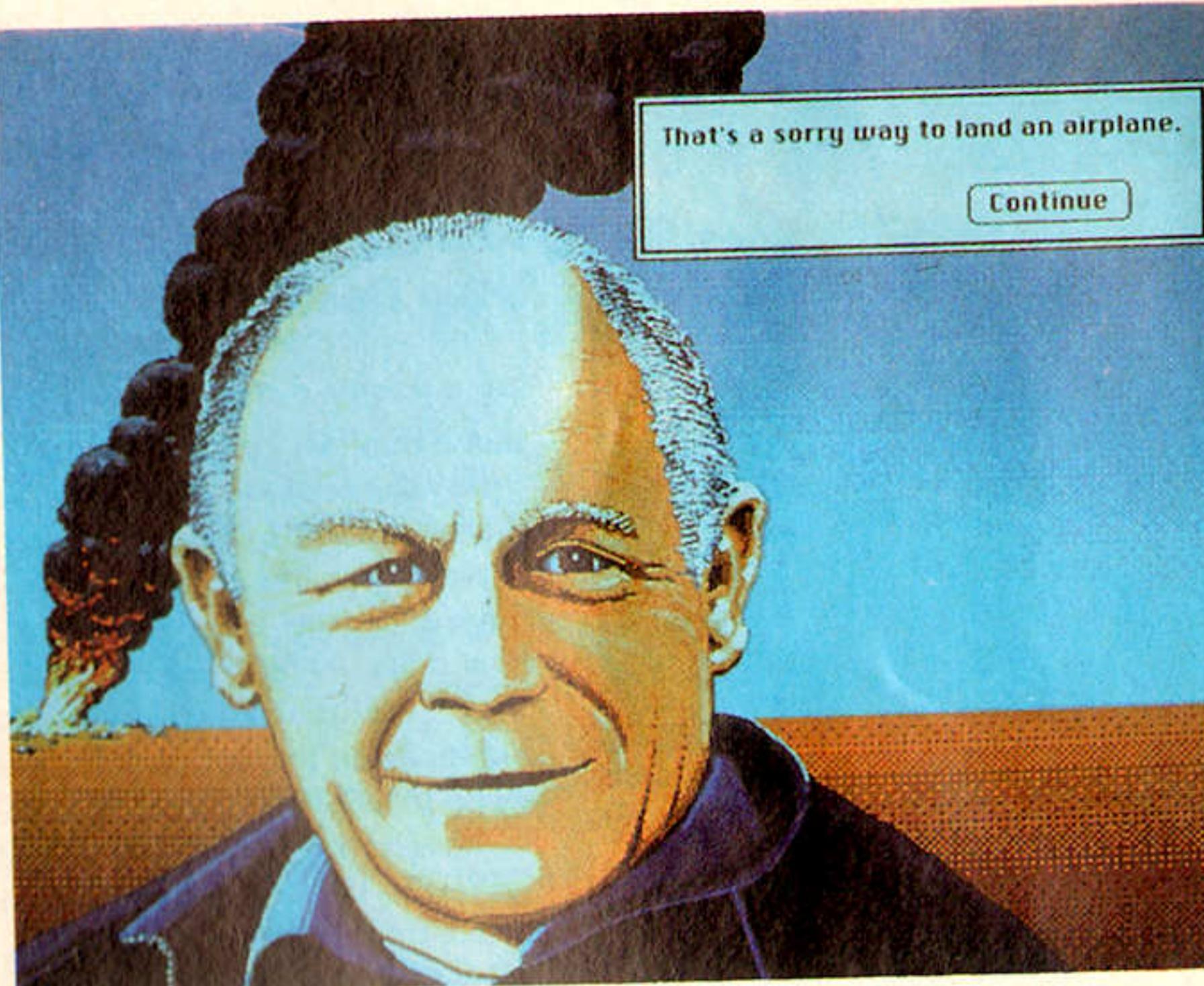
MIRAGE and FLIGHT STICK.

The Mirage is a small adapter box made to hook up to a Mac and let you use Apple style joysticks. There are two versions, one for the ADB (Apple Desktop Bus) used on the more recent Macs as well as the Apple IIGS, and one for the older style Macs (128, 512, and Plus) as well as other Apple II series computers. Since joysticks and such peripheral equipment are not widely available for the Mac, the Mirage is a wonderful piece of work. For one thing, it lets you use CH Products' Flight Stick with AFT.

Until I plugged in the Flight Stick, I had trouble landing fast planes like the F18. I could fly them all right, but on landings, I always seemed to blow it. I got tired of the General's snide remarks. Then the Mirage and the Flight Stick arrived, and I landed right the first time. For flying simulations, the Flight Stick, with its steady control and realistic airplane grip, is a much needed addition. I can't wait to test the Flight Stick with other flying types of games, and I'm curious about using a joystick with popular Mac games that normally use a mouse.

SHUFFLEPUCK CAFE from Broderbund is a sort of air hockey meets George Lucas game. Set on some strange world somewhere, you play a hard-hitting, high tech version of air hockey against an assortment of characters that must have been rejects from the bar scene of Star Wars. I mean, these are some weird dudes.

No muss, no fuss, just solitaire at its best. And that's about it for now. See you next time.



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The COMPUTER PLAY SCORECARD

One of the unique features of our magazine is the patented COMPUTER PLAY Scorecard. In order for you to be able to utilize it fully, we will explain the definitions of the various categories and give details on the final CP RATING.

NAME: This is the specific name found on the game package.

TYPE: We will attempt to specify the category of game being reviewed. Choices include ARCADE, ADVENTURE, TEXT, SIMULATION, TRADITIONAL, EDUCATIONAL, CREATIVITY, STRATEGY, and CARTRIDGE.

FORMATS: The currently available formats will be listed. Normally, we will also note the version of the game that was used for the review.

PUBLISHER: The company which created the game.

DISTRIBUTOR: The company that actually sells the game.

DESIGNERS: The individuals who designed the game.

AGES: The suggested age range for which the game is appropriate.

OF PLAYERS: The number of players who can play at one time.

SUMMARY of GAME RATINGS

NAME	PUBLISHER	RATING
Dungeon Master	FTL Games	9.65
Solitaire Royale	Spectrum HoloByte	9.50
ULTIMA V	Origin Systems	9.25
Bard's Tale III	Interplay Products	9.25
Nobunaga's Ambition	Koei	9.15
Where in Europe is Carmen Sandiego	Broderbund	9.10
Zak McCracken & the Alien Mindbenders	Lucasfilm Games	8.90
The Three Stooges	Cinemaware	8.75
The Games: Winter Edition	Epyx	8.50
Police Quest	Sierra On-Line	8.50
Shadowgate	Mindscape	8.40
Falcon F-16	Spectrum HoloByte	8.30
Project Stealth Fighter	Microprose	8.25
Sons of Liberty	SSI	7.50
Jinxter	Rainbird	6.75
Kid Niki	Data East	6.75
Ebonstar	Microllusions	5.25
Hunt for Red October	DataSoft	4.47
VIDEO TITLES		
The Legend of Zelda	Nintendo	9.13
Contra	Konami	7.63

REQUIREMENTS: Specific hardware or memory requirements beyond the minimum computer system for a specific format.

PRICE: The manufacturer's suggested retail price.

*** THE RATINGS ***

ABILITY LEVEL: Beginner, Intermediate, or Advanced. Our reviewers are instructed to rate this from the viewpoint of the average gamer.

PACKAGING: Are the materials slick and colorful? Does the package look professional? Are "bonus" items provided to enhance the game experience?

DOCUMENTATION: Are the instructions clear and understandable? Are all game situations covered? Are all necessary player aids or maps provided?

GRAPHICS/TEXT: Are the screen graphics clean and colorful? Do they add to the game? Do the graphics take full advantage of the machine's capabilities? For text games, was the story exciting and imaginative? This category includes sound and animation.

REALISM: This category is for vehicle simulations, war games, and traditional games (such as chess).

Does the game faithfully recreate the "look and feel" of the events being simulated? Are the statistics or historical facts correct? Did the game give you a true experience?

PLAYABILITY: The big one. Did the game hold your interest? Did you play for hours or get bored quickly? Did the game draw you into another world? Would you immediately want to show the game to a friend. Did the game break new ground in design? Did you want to play it again the next day?

THE NUMBERS

As you will note when reading a SCORECARD, each reviewer rates the game in each category and assigns a text and numerical rating.

A formula is then applied to the various ratings in order to reach the final CP RATING, the reviewer's overall rating of the game.

The percentages for each category are:

PACKAGING — 10%, DOCUMENTATION — 15%, GRAPHICS/TEXT — 25%, REALISM — 25%, and PLAYABILITY — 50%.

Yes, the percentages add up to 125%. This is because some games can only be rated for GRAPHICS but not for REALISM (such as PAC-MAN). Others can be rated for both but one category is more important than another. In these cases the 25% is split. FLIGHT SIMULATOR might be rated 10% for GRAPHICS and 15% for REALISM.

The breakdown in percentages to each category is subjective but represents our best efforts to assign a single rating for every game. We feel that every category is important. The game may be great but cheap packaging may detract from the overall value.

PLAYABILITY

Despite the fact that there are five categories in the rating process, you will note that a game will never get a truly good rating without getting a good score for playability.

READER INPUT

We give you the ratings for each category. If your own desires are different than ours then you can still work out your own formula. Perhaps you are totally uninterested in packaging. Then you can simply focus on the other category ratings.

YOU CAN'T TELL THE PLAYERS WITHOUT A . . .

The actual space taken up by the scorecards is small but they are an essential part of this magazine. The credibility of our reviewers and the magazine itself rides on the scorecards. We want a casual reader to be able to quickly spot the winners and losers each month. We welcome suggestions on how this process can be improved and standardized. Each issue will contain a summary of all ratings from previous issues.

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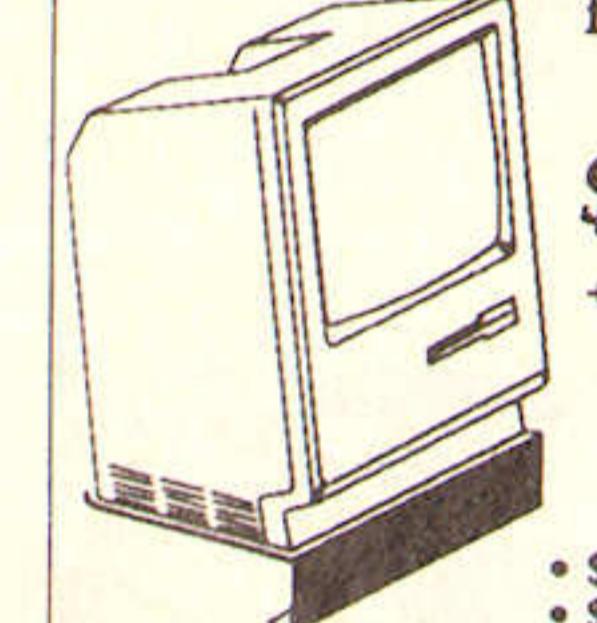
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Coming Attractions

Next month promises to be just as much fun as this month. Our special editorial section will focus on flight simulators. Our resident expert, H. Bloom will give you the real lowdown on six of the best programs now available. We'll also give you a preview of some new simulators on the horizon that will be here soon.

Other features that are tentatively scheduled (you never know in the world of computer games) include a look at UNIVERSAL MILITARY SIMULATOR by Jim Fink, a review of the addictive Eastern game TETRIS by Dr. Michael W. Ecker, an assessment of ROMMEL by Russ Ceccola, and a review of SHOGUN along with an interview with James Clavell, author of the popular series of Far Eastern books. Associate editor Russ Demaria has the honor of interviewing Mr. Clavell and we're sure that this will be an interesting article.

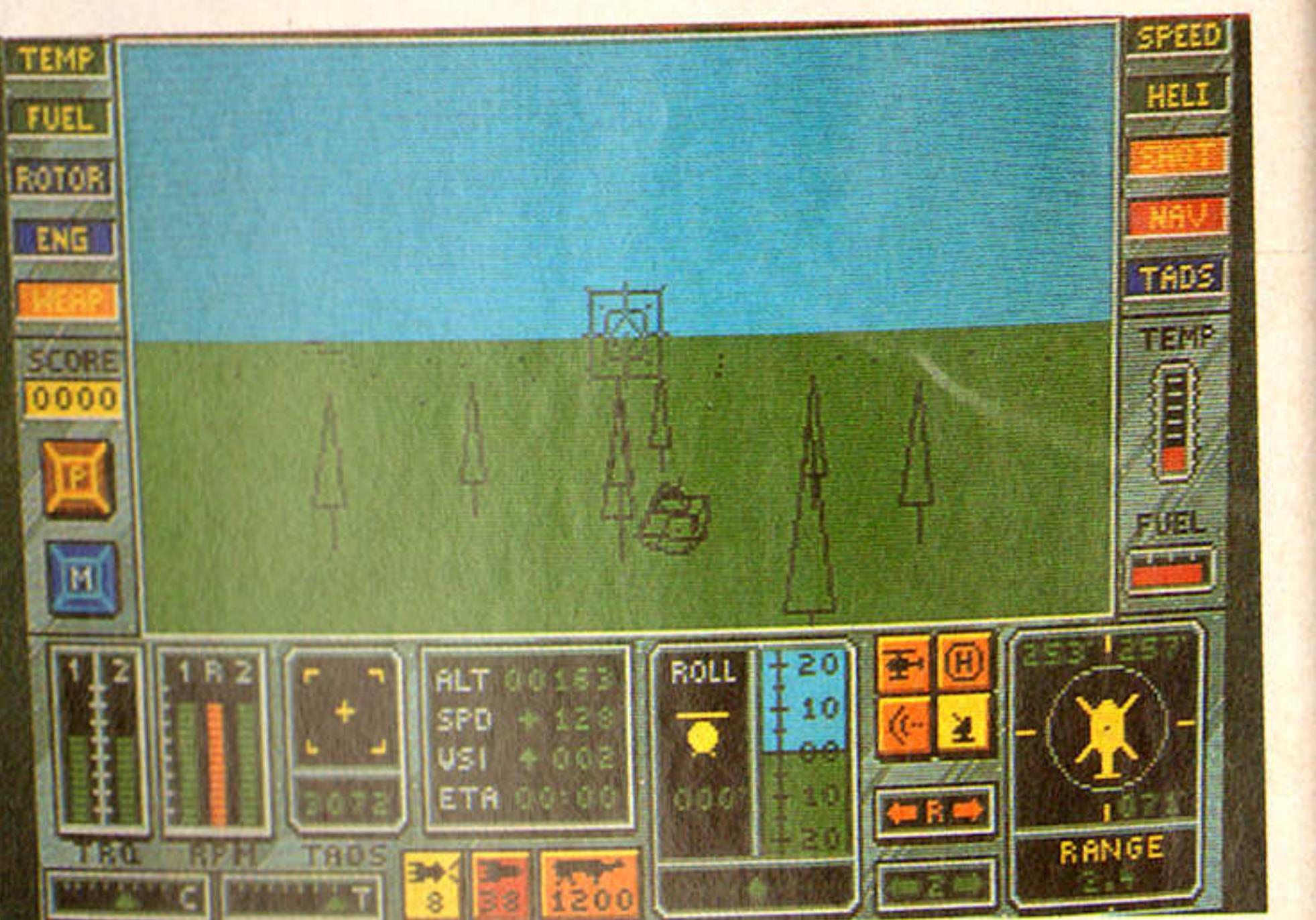


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MICROPROSES'S GUNSHIP: see next month's special section.



DATASOFT'S TOMAHAWK: one of November's flight simulators.

One of our new contributing editors, Cheryl Peterson, will be taking an in-depth look at online game playing. A veteran online player, Cheryl will be offering insights into the best of the games now available. Russ Ceccola will also be contributing a special piece on adventure games, sort of a primer for all of you who are now playing adventure games and those of you who are just getting started. And another new contributing editor, Jeffery Scott Hall, has compiled an article on several of the different versions of ARKANOID that are available on the market.

We also hope to have a look at BATTLE HAWK, the new air-war strategy simulation game from Lucasfilm Games. And, of course, we'll have all of our regular features which will include for the first time a slightly expanded video section so that we will now be able to cover Nintendo, Sega and Atari. All in all, it looks to be a great issue so make sure you get yours. See you next month.

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NEW HOPE FOR BATTERED STORY GAMERS.

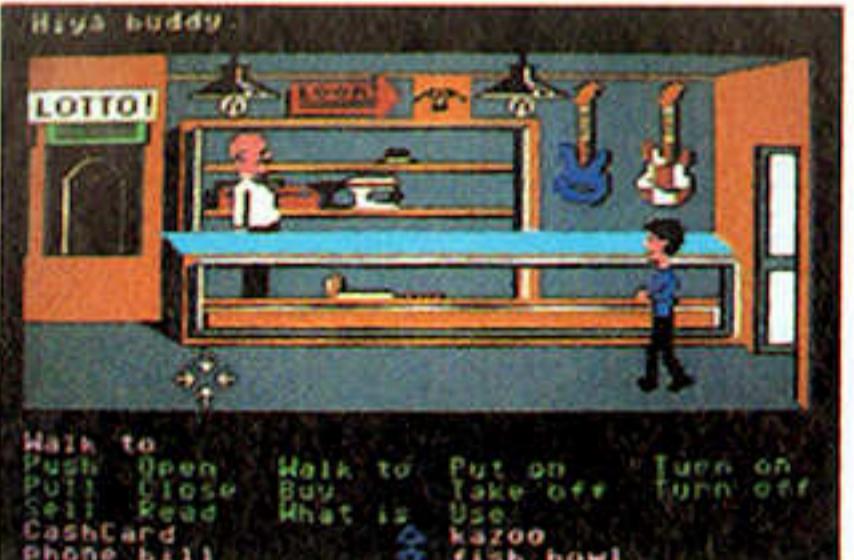
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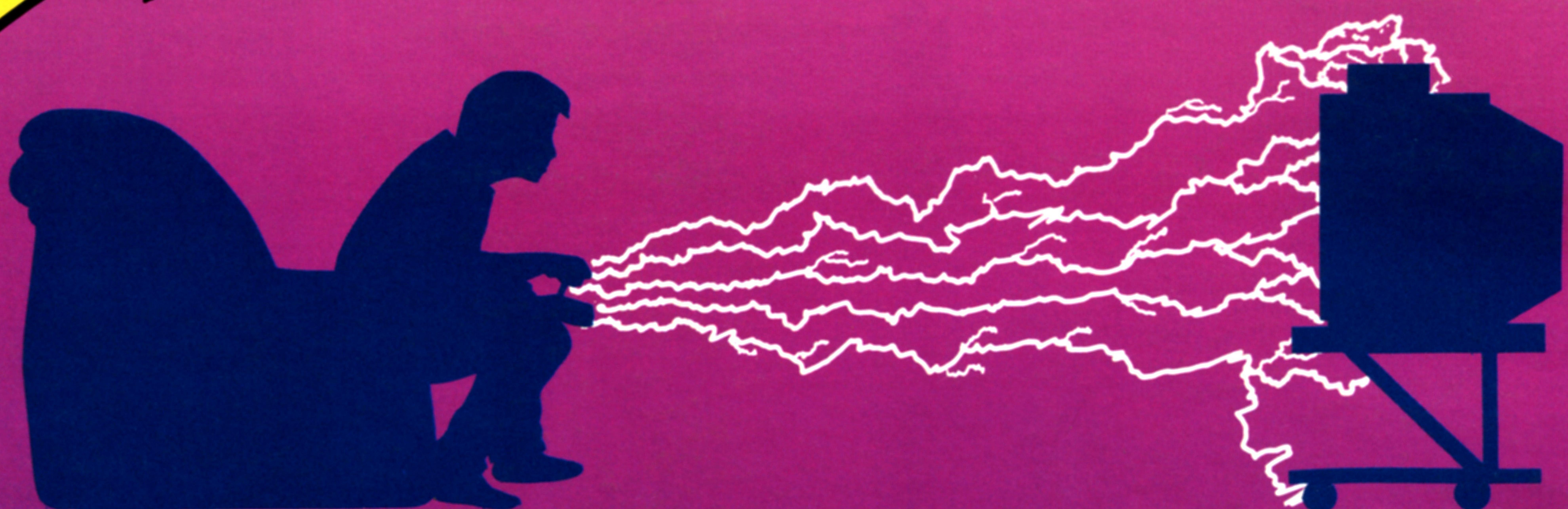
Crazy, but nicely crazy.

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